Special New Music Preview Issue

SPIN

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How She's Tied To 15 Murders

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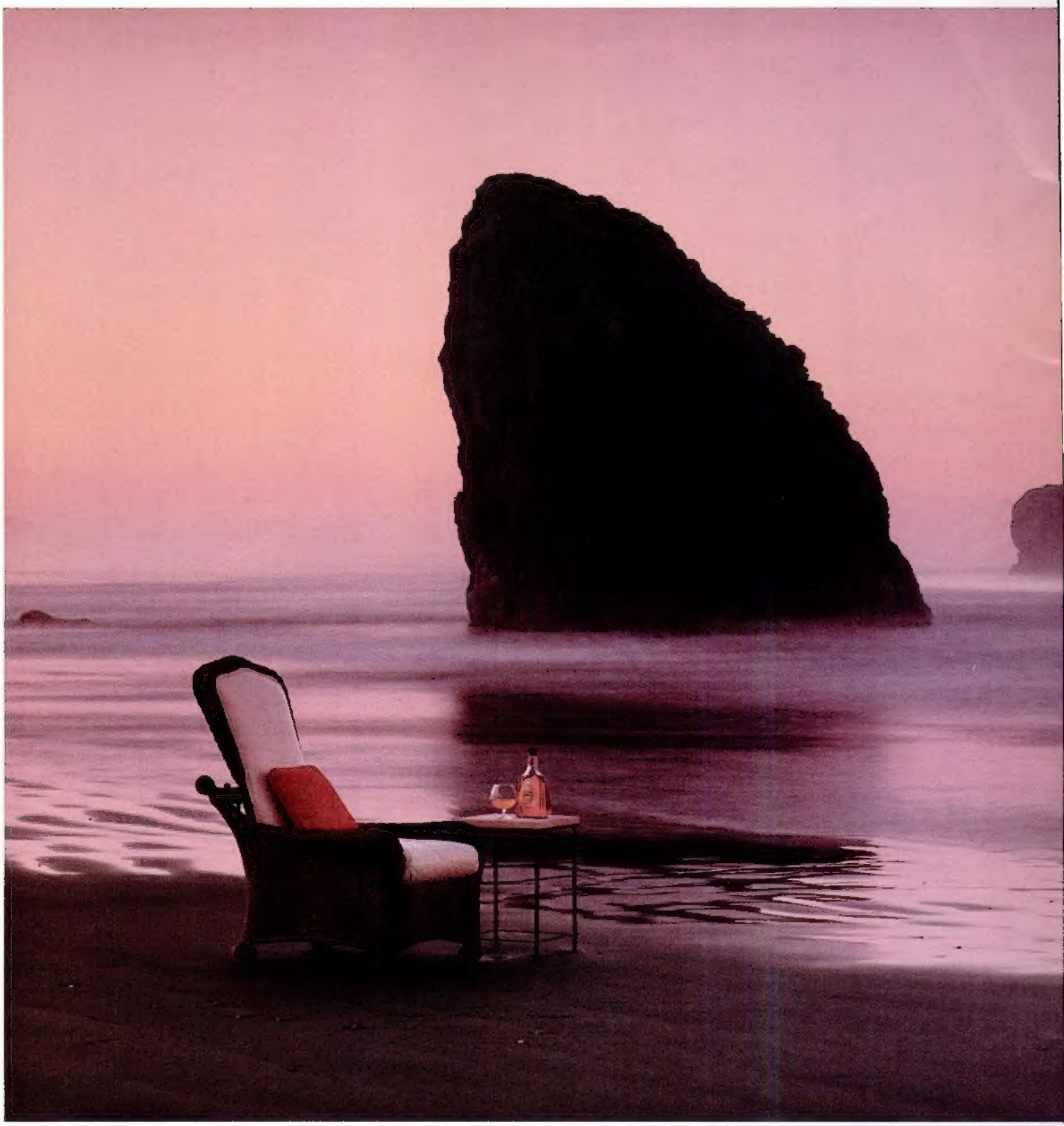

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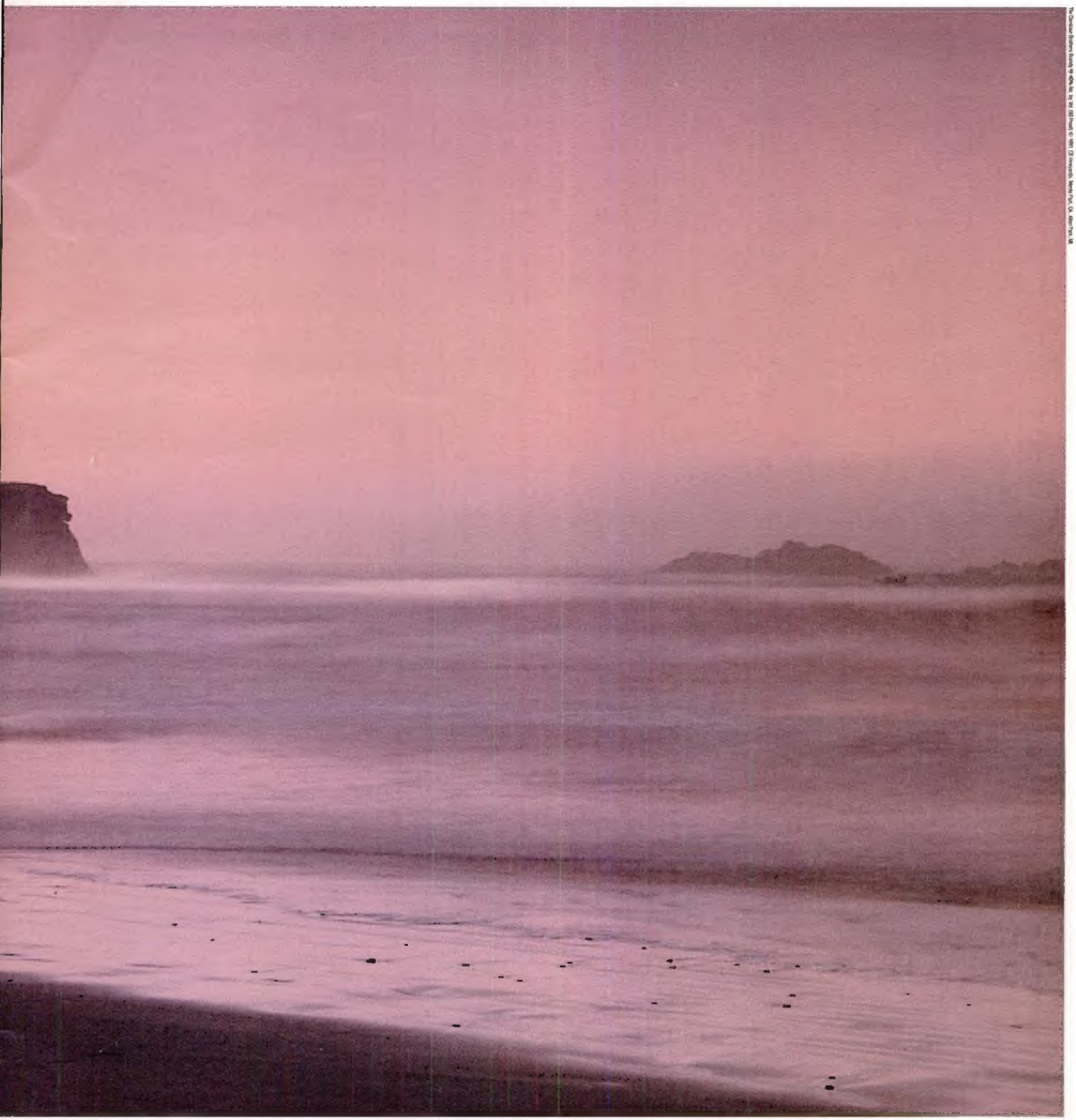

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IN

Volume 7, Number 10 January 1992

Special Issue:
NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

This is 1992; these are the bands that will make the world a better place for you and me. SPIN's annual tip sheet begins on page 28.

Nirvana, page 32.

Nirvana is the first thing to make Seattle front page news since Mount St. Helens erupted. And the band is just as noisy. The wildest sons of the Sub Pop scene are knockin' on heaven's door. By Lauren Spencer.

MICHAEL LEVINE

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Cover and above photographs by Greg Watermann

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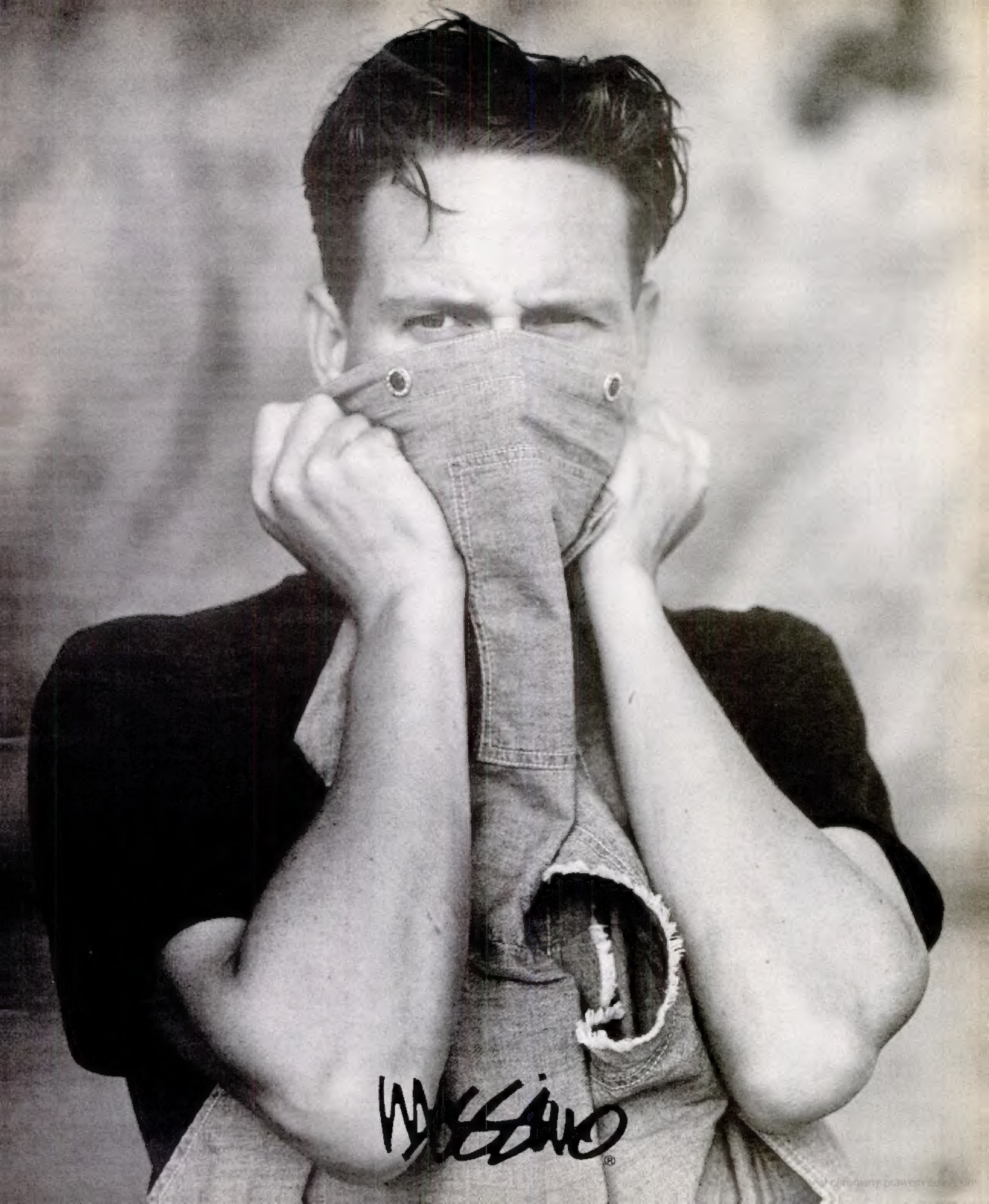
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TALE SPINNERS

Lauren Spencer

Music Editor **Steven Daly** found that his latest SPIN assignment, interviewing Teenage Fanclub (*page 36*), took him back to his native Scotland. Says Daly, "People in Glasgow kept insisting that the quality of life has rocketed since I left—I think they were trying to tell me something." • Executive Editor **Michael Pakenham** is a Pulitzer Prize–winner whose newspaper reporting and editing career included covering President John F. Kennedy and interviewing five other U.S. Presidents as well. About Oliver Stone, writer and director of the film *JFK*, whom he interviews in this issue's Antihero (*page 56*), Pakenham notes, "At moments, he seems as articulate as Kennedy and as smart as Nixon." • In the introduction to our New Music Preview (*page 28*), Senior Editor **Jim Greer** comments on the plight of America's independent record labels as they are consumed by greedy majors. "It's a dog-eat-dog-food world out there," he tells us. • Senior Editor **Lauren Spencer** interviews Nirvana for our cover story (*page 32*). "They are one of the hottest bands on the planet now," she says. "Besides that, the band has mastered the fine art of drinking, Dramamine, alarm systems, and the correct use of backstage deli platters. We think that's a good thing." • Photographer **Greg Watermann** shot Nirvana in Phoenix, Arizona. When lead singer Kurt Cobain walked in, Watermann recalls, "He had gotten blue hair dye all over his face. His whole head was blue." • Reporter **John Carlin** covered the trial of Winnie Mandela, and the entire South African drama of race and violence, for the London *Independent*. Now, Carlin reveals previously unreported evidence of Winnie Mandela's domination of a murderous "mini-Mafia" which she ran from the front yard of her Soweto home (*page 50*). • **Anastasia Vasilakis** has illustrated the Dreaming America column (*page 68*) since its inception. Her work has also appeared in *Diffusion* and *Stop* magazines, and she is currently art director at TVT Records. • Contributing Editor **Lisa Robinson**, a syndicated columnist, has written for the *New York Times*, *Vogue*, *Interview*, and *Cosmopolitan*. She feels MTV CEO Tom Freston, whom she interviewed for this issue (*page 54*), is "undeniably the hippest guy" at the channel. Robinson has previously written for SPIN on the Rolling Stones and David Bowie.

Greg Watermann

John Carlin

Anastasia Vasilakis

Employee of the Month: Associate Art Director Elizabeth Grubaugh is queen of the art department and the most stylish and cheerful person here at SPIN. Send her daisies.

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TOP SPIN

In the media's rush to embrace Magic Johnson as the face of AIDS, the danger is created that this will spread more ignorance than awareness of this complex epidemic.

When basketball superhero Magic Johnson announced that he had tested positive for HIV we were instantly wrenched from comfortable detachment into a war that was now inescapably ours.

When Thurman Munson, the great catcher for the Yankees, died in mid-season in a plane crash in the late '70s, the whole country was stunned, even people who didn't like him, the Yankees or baseball. Athletes aren't supposed to die in season. It breaks the spell sport casts—the sense of undiminishable vitality, the illusion of immortality. When Magic Johnson announced he had tested positive for HIV, that spell shattered once again, only this time much closer to our ear, like a thunderclap right over our house, and we all jumped.

Johnson is, uniquely, more than a sports superstar, he's an American superhero. So it hit us all the harder to see him at his press conference talking about having to retire from professional basketball to prepare to fight for his life against the feared onset of AIDS. As he said himself, if Magic Johnson could get infected, anyone can. And of course he didn't mean that arrogantly, he was merely articulating for us our own disbelief. Because until that moment, AIDS—the only material concern of HIV infection—didn't have a face. Now it does, and because it's the most improbable face imaginable, an American icon of goodness and charisma and potency, it dispelled all our fantasies of safety. Like the bombing of Pearl Harbor 50 years ago, one instant wrenched us from comfortable detachment into a war that was now inescapably ours.

Within 24 hours of having confirmed that he was HIV positive Johnson pledged to spread awareness about the virus and AIDS, to act as a "spokesperson for the virus" as he put it. His openness will do what no one else has been able to—and what two Republican presidencies have adamantly refused to do—which is bring AIDS out of the shadows of its stigma.

But there is also the danger that in his efforts to increase awareness, Johnson might unwittingly do more to spread ignorance about the disease, by becoming the poster child for the wrong and often misunderstood information. As clear as he has been to stress that he just has HIV, not full-blown AIDS, the distinction has already been subtly diffused. In the *New York Times*, Gina Kolata used the phrase "his AIDS virus infection" to describe Johnson's prognosis, and went on to say: "So far, studies have shown that virtually everyone infected with HIV, which causes AIDS, eventually becomes ill." That is simply not true. HIV is believed to cause AIDS but, as even Johnson is telling everyone, HIV does not necessarily mean a person will develop the disease. Hundreds of thousands haven't and the medical establishment (and reporters like Kolata, faithfully toeing the party line) explain this and other disparities by constantly and conveniently redefining the presumed boundaries of the disease. Which would make sense if new discoveries about the nature of the illness were being made with peripheral rather than blindered vision. But they're not. With AIDS, the telescope of scientific inquiry seems to be turned around the wrong way: Rather than to magnify the field of evidence, the federal health services are using it to preserve their insistence that HIV solely causes AIDS.

A couple of days after his press conference, a published report said that Magic Johnson would be taking AZT, the incredibly toxic drug commonly prescribed to treat AIDS (which Johnson doesn't have, remember) and now recommended—perhaps fatally—for people with HIV. Of all the mind-bending twists in the Magic Johnson chapter of the decade-long AIDS nightmare, the most ironic and tragic is that his brave coming out in the open might ultimately give us the gruesome, protracted spectacle of his own murder. Because Magic Johnson may well be healthy, and AZT may well kill him. And all the good work he will strive to do will be buried under the perpetuated myth that we know all we need to about HIV.

There are too many significant incongruences about the way the human immunodeficiency virus behaves to accept, on face value, the notion that it inevitably and fatally causes AIDS. The truth is the medical establishment doesn't know, finally, how significant HIV's role is in the development of AIDS. Our government and health agencies don't challenge the HIV hypothesis and resist independent challenges; as a result we have all our eggs placed for us in one, shaky basket. This is contrary to all scientific tradition, unless you go back to the medieval period, medicine's Golden Age, when you were as likely to be diagnosed a witch as anything else.

Some AIDS researchers, most

continued on page 62

WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

LISTEN TO YOUR HEAD.

POINT BLANK LETTERS

Nothing Compares 2 Sinéad

I'm dying. If Sinéad O'Connor ["Special Child," November '91] were any more sexy, charming, or real it would be unlawful. Every utterance from her perfectly childlike lips fuels the inferno of my innermost soul. Excellent article. Thank you immensely.
Matt Walton
Carmichael, California

I have spent the last hour reading and crying over Sinéad O'Connor's words. The interview is a testament to the power of the written word
Angelica Torres
Miami Beach, Florida

Sinéad had an abortion because the father wouldn't be "around and involved." So I've come to the logical conclusion, after reading about Sinéad's abused childhood, that her parents should have had an abortion, too.
Rick Genovese
Middletown, Connecticut

How can the singer who had an abortion of convenience state that all the problems in the world are the result of child abuse?
Richard Hard
Greenville, South Carolina

I think Ms. O'Connor is a beautiful woman, but she is confused on some points of Christianity. I admire her for seeking to make sense of reality-the-world. We all need to seek after God-the-truth.
Jonny Ray Keen
Holland, Michigan

Aww, You're Embarrassing Us

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on SPIN.

Being a big Metallica and Jane's Addiction enthusiast, I picked up your October '91 issue and was amazed. Never having read SPIN before (usually *Rolling Stone* is my first choice), I could not believe what I was reading. I actually read (not skimmed) the magazine from cover to cover.

Free-lance writing for the past couple of years has made me look for artistic elements along with truth. Most of the other magazines contained contrived BS, which, after reading the October issue of SPIN, I will no longer be reading. I was absolutely astounded to see the William Burroughs article. I also couldn't believe the entire Metallica crew donated their two cents. Usually Lars Ulrich is the PR man. The third-person narrative was a great twist on the Lollapalooza feature.

Clearly, I have made my point. Thank you so much for hiring intelligent, insightful writers. For now, I am hooked.
Denise McDermott
Middletown, New York

Free the Bound Periodicals

The Amnesty International issue [November '91] was outstanding. It was nice to be told what needs to be done instead of being hammered for doing nothing. The world has a lot of preachers, and I was glad to see that SPIN isn't one of them.
Vic Hunter
West Chicago, Illinois

Why am I just now finding out about the horrors going on in Guatemala concerning the killing of street children ["They Shoot Children, Don't They?" November '91]?
Karen Strott
Athens, Georgia

I beg you to stop turning your magazine over to these special-interest groups! I subscribe for your superb music coverage, not to see what political causes you endorse. Please cancel your likely plans for a Greenpeace or gay-rights issue.
Bill Merrill
Omaha, Nebraska

Don't Cry

Guns N' Roses would be doing even better if people like you would stop snooping into their lives and antagonizing them. I might be only 16 years old, but I do know the difference between what is said and what is printed, and I don't like jerks like you printing a bunch of bullshit! When I come home from a hard day at school, all I have is my music. And you're taking that away from me.
Angela Renée Petsche
East Dubuque, Illinois

Dear Bob Guccione, Jr.,

Regarding Axl Rose: He is God; you are a piece of shit. Grow up and quit trying to be your daddy. And yes, I'm sure he gets more pussy than you. He's not an ugly little turd like you; and he has some class.
Christina Robbins
Ruston, Louisiana

Bob Guccione, Jr., replies: I think it's sad that Axl Rose disappoints his fans, who are deluded to think he has the courage to back what his stupid mouth says. He called me out [in his song "Get in the Ring"], I came out, he ran the other way. Axl, you're a wimp and you're pathetic, and you let the kids down.

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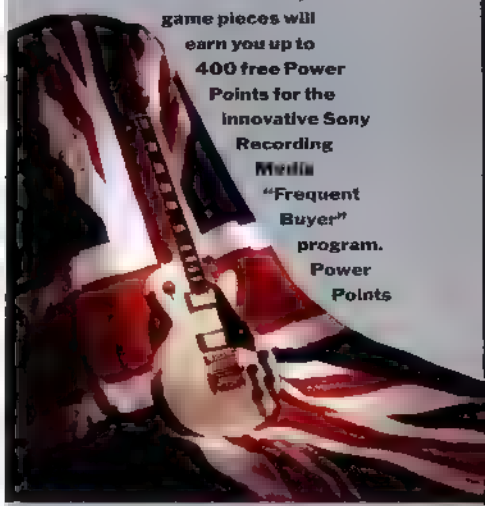

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GUNS N' 'SPLOSIVES

Music makes the world go round for some, but for others it takes a wee bit more. Welcome to the annual *Soldier of Fortune* convention.

In the ballroom of Las Vegas's Sahara Hotel, a wide-eyed vendor waves a stun gun in front of two women, firing off miniature Frankenstein bolts: *ziiiit*. "The closer to the head, the better!" he advises with an evil grin.

Soldier of Fortune magazine's 12th Annual Convention is going great guns. Near the entrance, the cannons of a huge armadillo-like vehicle welcome visitors. In action, the armored beast must be rather ominous, but here it's a harmless backdrop for a soft drink bar. A crowd of autograph-seekers mobs a table where the father of *S.O.F.*, 59-year-old Robert K. Brown, sits in a crisp uniform. Shoppers from around the world browse over what the magazine calls a "paradise" of "the latest in paramilitary weaponry and merchandise."

Most in the crowd could pass for everyday tourists if not for the improvised uniforms: camouflage, berets, U.S. Immigration baseball caps, Schwarzkopf boots, and T-shirts sporting smiley faces riddled with bloody bullet holes. A large man with a chest-length black beard chats with a recent *Playboy* centerfold in a booth, while across the aisle, a guy hawks posters of a half-naked woman in a fox-hole thrusting out her rump under the headline COMBAT ZONE. A one-armed man in a "Fuq Iraq" T-shirt fingers the new "Desert Fighter" knife, and a frail, quiet woman flips through the pages of *Screw Unto Others: Revenge Tactics for All Occasions*. Who are these people? Are there hard-core mercenaries here? People who'd gladly exterminate a smug SPIN reporter with a high-tech aluminum arrow (and, as espoused in *S.O.F.*, "preferably a central nervous system hit").

I squeeze into a van headed for the "firepower demonstration." A fat Texan next to me flashes a gap-toothed grin when I ask him why he's here: "Git to see old friends! Tell war stories!" A former pilot in Vietnam, he appreciates this era in which the public welcomes returning troops as heroes, yet he misses the good ol' days: "We kinda liked protestors. Made us feel important. Now nobody protests us old farts. Nobody comes 'round here callin' us baby killers or nothin'. Nobody cares anymore." His crimson-naped companion from Kentucky condemns the country's uptight weapons laws while pouring Wild Turkey into a can of Coke. "People are mellow where I'm from!" he shouts. "Shoot, we go up in the hills an' play with *dynamite*! Nobody says nothin'!"

In the desert, a packed grandstand faces an MC knee-deep in automatic weapons. He introduces each weapon before it's fired, and for the finale, jars of gasoline are placed beneath dynamite targets taped to stakes. The guns roar, and a huge wall of flame explodes into the sky. A scoutmaster from Sacramento watches from a nearby machine-gun rental booth. "I take my Boy Scouts out shooting, and they love it," he says. "Anybody would. It's like sex, controlling all that firepower." On the firing range, a 9-year-old blasts a pockmarked Ford. "Now you know what he wants for Christmas!" someone yells.

That evening, everyone winds down at the banquet. One speaker leads a prayer for Americans killed in the Gulf, then another tells a joke about a gay man who takes the bodies of his two lovers—AIDS victims—to a taxidermist. A Special Forces combat veteran across from me chuckles and sips his coffee. Of the 250 conventioneers he knows, only two are serious mercenaries. "They believe in what they're doing, and enjoy it," he explains. Having never blown anyone away, I ask him how it feels. "Just a slight pressure on your trigger finger, that's all," he says, squinting and drawing a bead on my forehead with an imaginary weapon. "The first time it's real emotional, but after a while it's just a job."

Later at the VIP party, editor Brown discusses the image of his flock. "A lot of reporters concentrate on the macho rednecks," he says, adjusting his hearing aid. "There are some here, but you have to look at the convention overall. You might not agree with these people's politics, but they're not clowns."

The next day, there's a police K-9 attack demonstration, but I skip it and head for the home front. The dogs of war have been enough for me.

EDWARD MOYER

JON RAZEL

Fortunate soldiers, *clockwise from top left*: Robert K. Brown, founder of *Soldier of Fortune*, and fellow conventioneers Wendy Rescur, Charles "Pop" Popham, and Alan Fletcher.

C & C Music Factory—Gonna Make You Sweat (Columbia) 416-933

Garth Brooks—No Fences (Capitol) 411-587

R.E.M.—Out Of Time (Warner Bros.) 417-923

Rod Stewart—Downtown Train/Greatest Hits—Selections From The Storyteller Anthology (Warner Bros.) 425-322

Paula Abdul—Spellbound (Virgin) 420-267

Bonnie Raitt—Luck Of The Draw (Capitol) 423-186

Michael Bolton—Time, Love & Tenderness (Columbia) 415-711

Mariah Carey—Emotions (Columbia) 428-029

Boyz II Men—Cooleyhighharmony (Motown) 424-754

Amy Grant—Heart In Motion (A&M) 424-457

Young MC—Brainstorm (Capitol) 427-062

Rod Stewart—Every Picture Tells A Story (Mercury) 423-614

Rush—Moving Pictures (Mercury) 423-798

Righteous Brothers—The Very Best Of—Unchained Melody (Verve) 423-772

The Moody Blues—Days Of Future Passed (Deram) 423-749

Blind Faith (Polydor) 423-673

The Allman Brothers Band—Brothers & Sisters (Polydor) 423-624

Eric Clapton—461 Ocean Boulevard (Polydor) 423-442

The Doors—In Concert (Elektra) 421-115/391 110

Marvin Gaye—Greatest Hits (Motown) 367-585

The Beach Boys—Pet Sounds (Capitol) 367-193

Joni Mitchell—Court and Spark (Asylum) 367-102

Boyz N The Hood—Music From The Motion Picture (Qwest/Warner Bros.)

The Robert Cray Band—Midnight Stroll Featuring The Memphis Horns (Mercury) 426-197

Traffic—John Barleycorn Must Die (Island) 364-935

Aaron Neville—Warm Your Heart (A&M) 425-611

Yes—Close To The Edge (Atlantic) 351-965

The Moody Blues—Keys Of The Kingdom (Threshold) 424-689

Rolling Stones—Exile On Main Street (Rolling Stones Rec.) 350-652

Slick Rick—The Ruler's Back (Def Jam/Columbia) 424-523

Van Morrison—Moondance (Warner Bros.) 349-803

Roger Waters—The Wall-Berlin 1990 (Mercury) 423-855/393-850

Motown's 25 #1 Hits (Motown) 319-996/399-998

Stevie Wonder—Orig Musiquarium I (Greatest Hits) (Tamla) 314-997/394-999

Iron Butterfly—In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida (ATCO) 294-629

Led Zeppelin—Houses Of The Holy (Atlantic) 293-597

James Taylor—Sweet Baby James (Warner Bros.) 292-284

Jackson Browne—The Pretender (Asylum) 292-243

Best Of Carly Simon (Elektra) 291-856

Emerson, Lake & Palmer—Brain Salad Surgery (Atlantic) 291-526

Deep Purple—Machine Head (Warner Bros.) 291-484

Led Zeppelin IV (Atlantic) 291-435

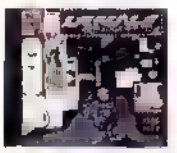
Fleetwood Mac—Rumours (Warner Bros.) 286-914

The Fabulous Thunderbirds—Walk That Walk, Talk That Talk (Epic/Associated) 423-053

Eagles—Hotel California (Asylum) 286-948

Jethro Tull—Aqualung (Chrysalis) 345-157

Van Halen (Warner Bros.)



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Matthew Sweet, *Girlfriend* (Zoo). This record had a bit of trouble finding a home (Sweet was dropped by A&M before it could be released), but you should be glad it finally did; *Girlfriend*'s crafty pop is worth the wait. With a crack backing band including Robert Quine and Fred Maher, Sweet dissects boy-girl stuff with style and aplomb, and he even includes a song about Winona Ryder. (Greer)

Various Artists, *The British Invasion: The History of British Rock* (Rhino). This nine-volume set is simply fabulous. Includes standard hits from groups like the Beatles, the Hollies, and Cream, plus a endless selection of all those incredibly catchy songs you've heard a zillion times on revival radio or covered by newer bands, but you never knew (or can't quite remember) who actually did them or where to find them. (Blackwell)

Thee Hypnotics, *Soul, Glitter & Sin* (Beggars Banquet). This is like finding some lost Iggy tapes—full of thick riffs and wilting vocals with peaks and valleys. Makes you want to go instantly into a dark, smoky, strobe-lit club, and grab a bottle of gin. After you polish off the bottle and take a twirl on the dance floor you may even spot Edie Sedgwick and Andy Warhol dancing together. (Spencer)

HEAVY ROTATION

STAFF SELECTIONS

Etta Baker, *One Dime Blues* (Rounder). Finger-lickin' good finger-pickin' blues straight from the piedmont of North Carolina. Baker's folksy instrumental renditions of traditional tunes will have your mojo working overtime. Extremely well polished, honest, and sensitive, her unique guitar sound is technically and spiritually magnificent. (Eldridge)

Holy Rollers, *Fabuley* (Dischord). Before I heard this I was depressed and wasting a beautiful fall, so I owe D.C.'s Holy Rollers a big favor. *Fabuley* is a true musical pick-me-up—grungy, guitar-based punk rock with all the goodies: Uplifting riffs and melodies, harmonizing vocals (R.E.M. fans would blush), and enough anger to jump-start any weary heart. Look Ma, I'm smiling. (Fidler)

Jerry Lee Lewis, *Rockin' My Life Away* (Warner Bros.). The first half of this disc features the Killer backed by a punk-rockin' honky-tonk band circa 1979 with Elvis session man James Burton on guitar; includes a streamlined cover of Dylan's "Rita May" that's awfully scary good. Part Two, from 1980 sans Burton, features an ornery "Over the Rainbow" (yes, *that* "Over the Rainbow"), rockabilly-style. Jerry Lee Lewis is crazy. (Foege)

From left: Tres Manos, D.N.A., Rudeboy, Magic Stick, and Sil.

URBAN RENEWAL

Like Dr. Frankenstein's big mistake, the multiculti combo of Urban Dance Squad has cast a blight across all our lives. These brightly colored Amsterdam natives, with their hyperactive, raw-throated singer, flailing guitars, unusual time signatures, and chameleon versatility, would have probably fallen through the proverbial crack ages ago had it not been for a relentless two-year promotional push, which culminated with notable MTV exposure of their catchy "Deeper Shade of Soul" video.

Led by rapping Surinamese front man Rudeboy (Patrick Tilon), fueled by a powerhouse band—bassist Sil (Silvano Matadin) guitarist Tres Manos (René Van Barneveld), and drummer Magic Stick (Michel Schoots)—and the cutting and scratching DJ D.N.A. (Arjen De Vreede), UDS ventures into musical territories unbeknownst to many of its U.S. and U.K. brethren.

Unlike those of us overdosed on rock radio formats geared toward specified target audiences (remember, the Netherlands is hardly a powerful bastion of the corporate rock machine), these Dutch purveyors of sound grasp the overall "science" of music. They understand the aural terrain shared by Public Enemy, Masters of Reality, Suicidal Tendencies, and the Beatles, and have put this chemistry to use in the formation of a unique style.

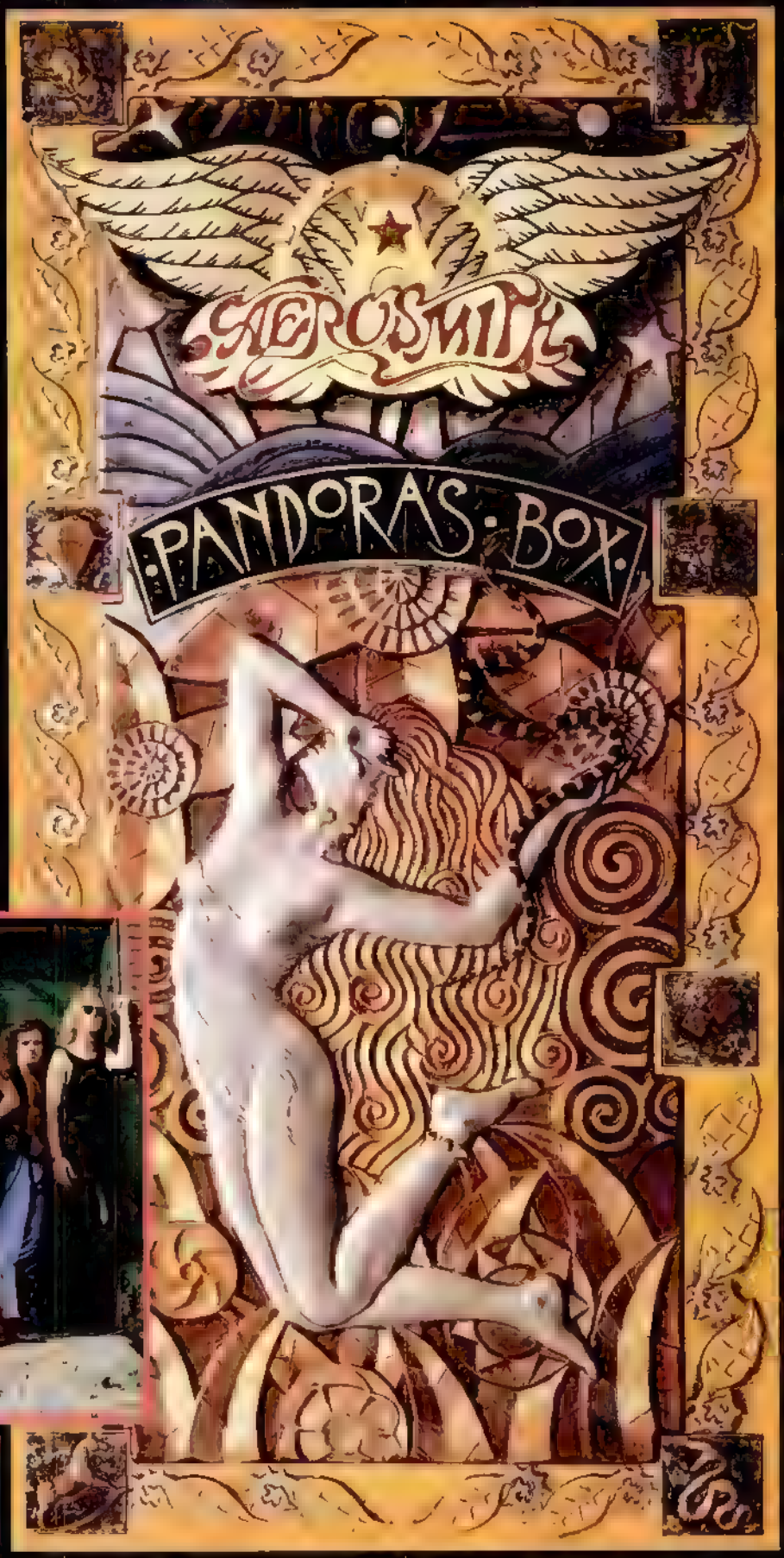
On the night of our interview in New York, on the eve of the release of Urban Dance Squad's stellar sophomore disc, *Life 'N Perspectives of a Genuine Crossover*, I put the band's broad tastes to the test, attending a bash DJed by South Bronx hip hop legend Kid Capri, partying at the acid-jazz hot spot Giant Step, and checking out gigs by alternative heroes King Missile and Axl Rose's brother's metal band, Dr. Whiskey (also catching a "surprise appearance" by the lowly BulletBoys). Needless to say, UDS showed a complete understanding of the relationships within this spectrum.

Rudeboy explains: "We come from a position of straight-up respect and love for many types of music. Consider us people who are giving tribute to hip hop because we understand that it's a form of rock'n'roll. When it comes to culture, we come from a closed environment, while you have a melting pot here in America. You, as Americans, just push it aside—you don't know what you have—while we picked up the rap records and the rock records and so on, figured out the science and applied it to our music. It's not a gimmick, it's natural. As a band, you've gotta go for that and just be real. It's really no big deal."

STEVEN BLUSH

RICHARD VARNDEN

GO AHEAD... OPEN IT



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DEAR ELVIS

Any New Year's resolutions?
David Huskey
Athens, Georgia

When a man gets as old as I've gone and got, he knows a damn sight better than to fool with such a thing as resolutions. One year I tried to lay off hard liquor, one time it was the ol' prescription medicine, then I was fool enough to give up running around town after the gals. All it does is make you want to do it more, and I always last about three days before I start raising eternal hell again. Far as I recollect there's three things I ain't never done: I never killed a man, I never ate in no sushi bar, and I never put a turd in a paper sack and dropped it off the interstate bridge on no police car. So there's my resolutions: 1) I won't kill nobody, 2) I ain't eatin' in no sushi bar, and 3) I won't drop no sack of turds off the interstate bridge at the police. Them ought to be pretty easy to hold to. Old lang sign,
Elvis

DANISH ADDICTION

"I'll never be the same girl twice," Gretchen Seager sings on "Julie's Blanket" from Mary's Danish's new LP, *Circa*, exploring the themes of evolution and self-manipulation. Seager and colyricist Julie Ritter turn almost every song into an effusive confessional (poet Anne Sexton is thanked in the liner notes), and the wordy lyrics do get pretentious occasionally. But the payoff for the occasional gaffe is pop music with ambition—art rock with an unforced feminist agenda.

Seager and Ritter both grew up in L.A. and then met as French majors at Berkeley. Dissatisfied by the meager broth of modern French philosophy and coffeehouse poetry, they moved back to L.A. and drummed up a band with a few willing males. Mary's Danish released an album called *There Goes the Wondertruck* in 1989, but the new *Circa* is the first creation of its full six-member state.

Circa's strength lies in its discordant energies and enjoyably incompatible desires roped into one jumpy whole with plenty of skittery guitar throughout. Ritter complains about the comparisons people tend to make between Mary's and bands like Throwing Muses, probably on the basis of the gender mix as much as the sound. "I'm not really influenced by anything contemporary," she says. "The things I grew up listening to—Peter, Paul and Mary, Joni Mitchell—influenced me more than anything now. It's what seeped into my brain before I even knew what music was about that matters."

Thankfully, as Ritter and Seager grew older, they let more than folk-rock seep into their consciousnesses: The band X was an inspiration, as were an uncategorizable assortment of movies and books, all of which have a lot to do with the wonderful sounds you hear on *Circa*.

IAN KREILKAMP

From left: James Bradley, Jr., David King, Louis Gutierrez, Chris "Wag" Wagner, Gretchen Seager, and Julie Ritter.

R A D I O G R A F F I T I

grand puba

There'z no denyin' that Brand Nubian started a world outburst. The "All for One" remix has Nu-York jackin' for beats! Everywhere you go, someone's Legend is pumpin' the 808 bass. Using the original bass line, BN incorporates new slang that'll make yor jaw sag. But there'z been lotza talk of the famed Grand Exalted Puba leavin' the group! Well, it'z true, 'cuz I jus' got Pu's new solo single, frum the *Strictly Business* movie soundtrack!

Grand Puba rips Fonda Rae's "Fat Rat" beat with rapid fire rhymes. "Fat Rat" is one of those rare songs that'z only played at discos just before closin' time. The club ownerz obviously don't want us slammin' their places apart to this toon so they save it for last. A few yrs. ago it was introduced to rap by Eric B. & Rakim, but Pu's version is cleaner & has less programming & mix-downs, plus he uses tha original. Lyrikally, Pu's ego gets stroked while he rocks sum reggae & talks about jayin' tha ladies. Nowadaze that'z all you hear frum hip hop: people talking about their sexual escapades. Nuthin' wrong with that! Sex is a topik that'll never run out of poetic positions!

I like when GP rocks the mike. He'z simple, entertaining, & well versed, as well as clear & understandable! This is a jam that you'd expect to drop in the summer & play right thru tha year. Together BN made a good team but apart from each other they'll still make some of the dopest records ever! Don't stop to clock, be the first on your block to cop Grand Puba when he drops! **BONZ MALONE**

TOP TO BOTTOM: JAIME BIONDO KLAUS LAUBMAYER

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lisa in the sky with violins

On her first tour as John Mellencamp's violinist, Lisa Germano cried constantly.

"I still call it the 'Scare Lisa' tour instead of the *Scarecrow* tour," she says. "I cried probably every day, because it was really difficult. John had never been around anyone who cried all the time. He didn't know what to do."

Germano laughs and fires up a Marlboro Light as she tells the story, too busy to cry now. Over the last three years, while waiting for Mellencamp the painter to ease away from his easel, she took the Coug's advice and developed her own material.

The result is her brilliant, self-financed debut album, *On the Way Down From the Moon Palace*, a magical mystery tour of moody, moving tracks. The styles range from the otherworldly music box sounds of "Simply Tony" to the drunken country sing-song of "Dig My Own Grave." She named the record for the fairy-tale place where women live to please their men. The disc has sold about 2,500 copies in limited release in Indianapolis, where she shares an equipment-filled apartment with her black cat, Miamo-Tutti.

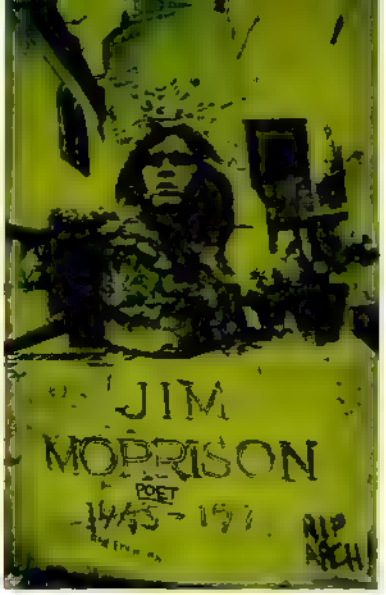
Germano plays all the instruments on *Moon Palace*—violin, guitar, mandolin, piano, accordion, and autoharp—with the exception of drums and bass on three tracks, and she sings in almost a little girl's voice, usually about heartbreak and devotion. (Her most recent composition, "You Make Me Want to Wear Dresses," is a little more hopeful.)

During Germano's other non-John time, she played on the latest efforts by Simple Minds and Bob Seger. She's not on Mellencamp's new *Whenever We Wanted*, but plans to tour with him next year. She also contributed two songs to the soundtrack of *Falling From Grace*, Mellencamp's directorial debut due out in Febrı ary.

"I'd have never finished a song in my whole life if John hadn't said, 'Why don't you write a song for my soundtrack?' " Germano says. "That's what gave me my first real direction."

MARC ALLAN

Mellencamp violinist Lisa Germano goes solo.



There's been much discussion about whether or not Jim Morrison's poetry was bad, but until now one thing was for damn sure: The Lizard King was *alive* when he wrote it. Deborah and Stacey Lazarus of Petersburg, Virginia, have just released *Morrison: Poems From the Other Side*, a book of the former Door's most recent works "as channeled to" them through a Ouija board and other psychic means. SPIN asked the happy couple to contact Morrison and ask him how this past year went. And so they did.

JIM MORRISON'S 1991 TOP TEN

1 The worst of 1991: *The Doors* movie by Oliver Stone and his band of renegade traitors. Val Kilmer might do well to keep the day job.
2 *The Doors* soundtrack album should be called *Oliver Stone in a Box*. The reason he put the Velvet Underground song on it is Lou Reed probably blew him.
3 Another bad idea: Bush's Gulf War. Saddam uses George's toothpaste, then gives it back to him.
4 Rap music: It's like nothing else so much as sandpaper on a cock.
5 Death metal bands: I'd like to say to them all, "Ugh, ugh, ugh—get thee back to the cave."
6 Axl Rose: He's a good loose moose.
7 I don't care how much he pumps himself up with Hans and Franz, Glenn Danzig is just a cheap imitation of a god—me!
8 Most redundant album: *Flashpoint* by the Rolling Stones, a bunch of old guys with no new ideas, whose last good album was *Sticky Fingers*.
9 Favorite album: *Out of Time* by R.E.M., an outfit that has class. Keep up the good work, guys!
10 A lot of people saw fit to attack me in the press this year, because they didn't think I'd be around to defend myself. I'd like to invite all who have complained about my morals and influence to compare their own bank books and karma with mine.

For a copy of this man's poetry from the grave, send $5.00 to Real Records, P.O. 3135, Petersburg, Virginia 23805.

TOP TO BOTTOM: AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS; ANDREW SCALIN

In the

darkest hour

comes

the light...

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OF THE SOUL AND

OF THE CROSS:

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SPIN PATROL

Have It Your Way! At least 92 restaurants in Luoyang, China, were shut down after inspectors found they were putting opium into their dishes to addict customers to their food. Almost a ton of pods and seeds was confiscated. • **Down Wit' P.P.:** Air Force pilot Craig Fisher lost a $19 million F-16 jet when he was unable to work his "piddle pack," a sponge-filled pouch for in-flight urination. He was raising himself up for a better position when his foot hit the rudder pedals. Fisher ejected safely. • **To Serve and Protect:** Police officer Chester Noland reportedly overreacted in corralling 14 teenaged skateboarders who were making noise in Sunrise, Florida. Noland lined the boys up and hit them between their legs with his nightstick while singing variations of *The Brady Bunch* theme. One boy's recreation of the song: "There's a story / Of a man named Brady / Who has 14 juveniles of his own / All of them had skateboards / And little dicks." • **Gone With the Wind:** Baylor University freshman Kyle Krebs was ticketed by campus police for breaking wind in violation of an ordinance prohibiting the release of obnoxious odors (designed for things such as smoke bombs). • **911 Is a Joke:** Frank Snyder, a volunteer on Sacramento's suicide prevention hotline, confessed that he slit the wrists of a man whom he knew to be a chronic caller to the hotline, but who had become too demanding. • **Parental Advisory—Sticky Sticker:** A Newport, Oregon, man won a $3,000 lawsuit against a department store after a tag ("Inspected by No. 12") from underwear he purchased stuck to his penis so firmly he couldn't remove it. After soapy water and rubbing alcohol failed, he went to a doctor, who removed the sticker with an adhesive dissolver. However, that caused a rash and left a scar in the shape of the sticker. • **Hart to Heart:** A neurologist comfirmed in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that a woman he studied went into epileptic seizures when she heard the voice of *Entertainment Tonight*'s Mary Hart. "It was very dramatic," Dr. Venkat Ramani told the *New York Times*. "She would look confused and far away, the expression in her eyes, she looked like she was far away and out of it." • **First Blood:** Vietnam vet Dennis Alvez, 43, surrendered to police in Baltimore after a standoff in which he defended the "Viet Cong" village he had constructed in his backyard. Alvez, married with three children, had built tunnels, sniper nests, cages, and a command bunker. • **Meat Puppet:** A 50-pound "meat-like" mass was found in the grease trap of a McDonald's in Clanton, Alabama. It was determined to be cellulose, in "skin-like" strands that "had the color and feeling of an old bacon strip," and when dried became translucent like onion skin. The Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences said only that it was a "plant derivative," and the restaurant owner was certain it came in from outside.

Just when you thought it was safe to forget about 1991, we throw a few of its strangest moments back at you.

The Nazi Bunch: The British Satellite Broadcasting Company developed a new TV series called *Heil, Honey, I'm Home*, featuring Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun living next to a Jewish family in Hollywood in the 1960s. Sneak-preview audiences complained the show was too sympathetic to Hitler, but a program director said the dictator "will clearly come off the loser in domestic disputes."

Amnesty Corner

In our November issue, guest-edited by Amnesty International's Jack Healey, SPIN pledged to work for the release of six Prisoners of Conscience. Each month we'll update you on the status of these victims of tyrannies most of us could never imagine. We will ask you to write letters of support for one (or more) of your choice—in effect your own adopted prisoner of conscience—or to contact Amnesty International, U.S.A. (322 Eighth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001; tel. 1-800-55-AMNESTY) to find out how you can help. Protest works. Lots of protest works better, faster.

In our last issue we announced that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, general secretary of Myanmar's National League of Democracy, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "for her nonviolent struggle for democracy and human rights." Since then there has been no change in her status or that of any of the others.

Please support Amnesty's efforts to free these prisoners. Every letter counts.

Aung San Suu Kyi
General Saw Maung
Chairman
State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)
c/o Ministry of Defense
Signal Pagoda Road
Yangon, Union of Myanmar (Burma)

José Ramón García
Lic. Carlos Salinas de Gortari
President de la Republica
Palacio Nacional
06067 Mexico DF, Mexico

Riad al-Turk
President Hafez al-Assad
Presidential Palace
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Orton Chirwa and Vera Chirwa
H.E. the Life President
Ngwazi Dr. Kamuzu Banda
Life President of the Republic of Malawi
Office of the President and Cabinet
Private Bag 388
Lilongwe 3, Malawi

Nguyen Chi Thien
Do Muoi
Chairman of the Council of Ministers
The Council of Ministers
Hoi Dong Bo Truong
Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam

death of a promoter

The Laughter, Love and Music concert tribute to Bill Graham. Graham's photo, *center*, with the two others, Steve Kahn and Melissa Gold, killed in the crash.

Legendary rock hawker Bill Graham dies in a helicopter crash.

A World War II refugee who fled Europe for America at age 11, unable then to speak a word of English, Bill Graham became the most successful music promoter of all time, earning millions of dollars, and donating millions to charities. The 60-year-old showman presented his final concert on October 25, a Huey Lewis and the News gig just east of San Francisco, then headed for home in his private helicopter during a torrential downpour that severly limited his pilot's visibility. Graham, his longtime companion Melissa Gold, and pilot Steve Kahn, died instantly when the copter smashed into a 225-foot-high electrical transformer.

For 25 years Bill Graham defined and dominated the concert circuits, working with every major rock act except the Beatles—including the Stones, Dylan, and Graham's favorite, the Grateful Dead. His many projects included Live Aid, the U.S. Festival, the Amnesty International tours, and Rock for Peace in Moscow. Though he's credited as a major force in the development of large-scale arena rock, Graham actually preferred more intimate settings. A straight man among hippies, he got his start booking psychedelic rock acts into his two famed Fillmore clubs (Fillmore East in New York and Fillmore West in San Francisco).

Before Graham's memorial service at a San Francisco synagogue, a glum Carlos Santana told reporters, "The only peace I find in this is that I know he's collecting tickets on the other side."

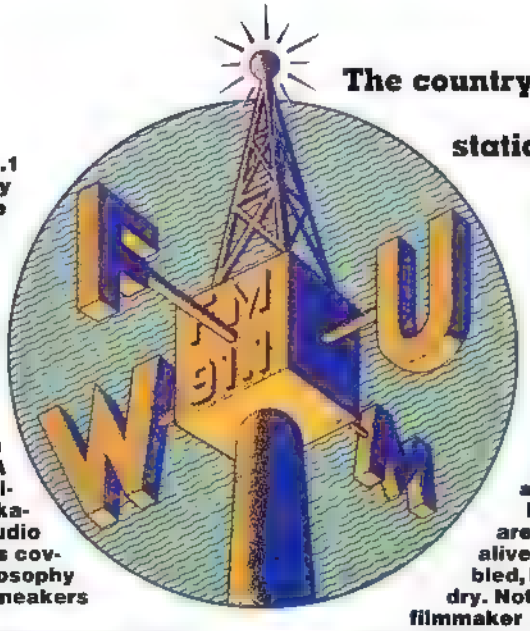
Graham considered his rock productions an art form. In his words: "The greatest challenge a man can have is the opportunity to say, 'Well, I'm going to take those creative human beings and put them out there, and I'm going to encourage these human beings to watch, and then I'm going to stand back and see it work.' "

His son David has pledged that Bill Graham Productions will carry on without him.

RUSTY WESTON

S.O.S.

The country's oldest free-form radio station struggles to keep its signal in the sky.



New Jersey's WFMU (91.1 FM) has become legendary as home of some of the most creative radio in history. Completely supported by its listeners, WFMU is known as an oasis in the airwave desert. While most stations practice one-dimensional "narrow-casting" ("classic rock," "all news," "power hits," etc.), WFMU embraces everything in the wonderful world of sound. A block of rare Sonic Youth might be followed by Groucho Marx, Polish rockabilly, an unsigned rapper, or an in-studio by a gospel choir. On-air discussions cover topics ranging from Hegelian philosophy to the mystical significance of sneakers hanging from telephone wires.

WFMU's existence is now in jeopardy as the result of the discovery of a technical error in the 31-year-old station's license. Because of this mistake, the coverage area of WFMU slightly overlaps that of four other public radio stations. These stations are urging the FCC to trim WFMU's power by more than half, cutting the signal off from thousands of supporters in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and New Jersey. WFMU, a meager 1440 watts, wants only to maintain its longtime audience, while three of its four opponents (with signals ranging from 10,000 to 50,000 watts) are attempting to significantly increase their coverage areas.

In this time of peril, the fans of WFMU are doing their best to keep their station alive. Listener donations have nearly doubled, but legal costs are bleeding the station dry. Notables such as poet Allen Ginsberg and filmmaker Jim Jarmusch have pledged support, and artists like Sonic Youth, They Might Be Giants, Marshall Crenshaw, and Bongwater have performed benefits. A charity art auction is planned for the spring, including works as daring, fun, and esoteric as the station itself. To find out more, or to make a donation, write WFMU, Upsala College, East Orange, NJ, 07019.

JOHAN KUGELBERG

TOP: JOHN WERNER

THE COLD ROCK STUFF

THESE ARE A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

Great Speeches of the 20th Century Getting your daily allowance of history lately? Probably not, so check out Rhino's four-volume box set of the most compelling speeches of our century. Where else could you find Robert Kennedy's "Presidential Campaign Address," Jesse Jackson's "Address to the Democratic Convention," Babe Ruth's "Farewell to Baseball," Richard Nixon's "On Releasing the Watergate Tapes," and Frank Borman's "Christmas Greetings From Space" all in one place?

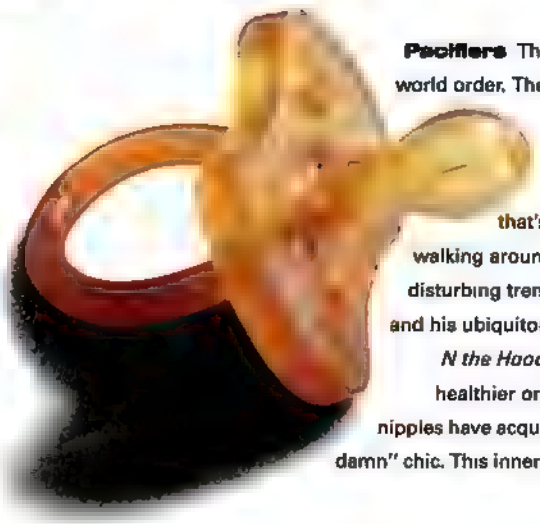
Kimiko Mason Kostaki This book by photographer Seiichi Tanaka, makeup artist Linda Mason, and painter Mark Kostabi contains 100 art pieces, each of which integrates celebrities—from singers to psychics—into the work, through body paint and visual surroundings. The painted upon-and-around include L.L. Cool J, Russell Simmons, Too Much Joy, Morton Downey, Jr., a topless Debbie Harry, and SPIN's own Bob Guccione, Jr.

Striped T-Shirts Whether worn with tattered khakis on the skate ramps of Cali, baggy Girbauds on the streets of Manhattan, or white jeans at the raves of England, the striped T-shirt is the look of today.

Young men all over are finding that the stripe provides a boyishly casual facade that drives the chicks wild. Vintage Beach Boys styles are hot, as are the muted stripes of Stüssy, but the most popular versions are made by J. Crew, particularly their classic updating of the "Bobby Brady." Stripes and stripes forever.

The L.A. Musical History Tour Rock authority Art Fein's a really cool guy, so when he offered to take some of us at SPIN on a guided tour of landmarks included in his book, we jumped at the chance. Cruising down Sunset Strip in a red convertible, Beach Boys blasting from the stereo, we saw where Eddie Cochran wrote "Summertime Blues," where Jim Morrison dangled from his fingertips many floors up, and where Axl Rose worked as a video store clerk. This book is chock-full of such entertaining oddities and little-known locations. Take it with you on your next trip through La-La Land, especially if Art himself can't come along.

Pacifiers The recession, serial killers, Bush's new world order. These are scary and alienating times we live in. People are grasping for a sense of security, lost innocence, and . . . um . . . their mommies. Maybe that's why more and more grown-ups are walking around with pacifiers in their mouths. This disturbing trend has many antecedents: Flavor Flav and his ubiquitous baby bottle, Ice Cube's pal in *Boyz N the Hood*, and Maggie from *The Simpsons*. A healthier oral fixation than, say, smoking, rubber nipples have acquired an "I look crazy and I don't give a damn" chic. This inner child stuff is getting way out of hand.



Remote Control Romance So you're out there cruising for babes or studs, and you meet your match, and you start to get romantic. That's cool, but *then* what? Don't be stupid! It's time for the video fireplace! Thirty minutes of blazin' mood enhancement right on your TV screen—you provide the warmth. And hey, all you ecoconscious romancers: There's no smoke pollution or tree destruction involved. But is the tape itself biodegradable? Hmmm. Dial *1-800-CRACKLE*.

FAR LEFT: STEPHAN APICELLA-HITCHCOCK; BOTTOM: JAMIE BONOO

Compiled by: Mark Blackwell, Jim Greer, and Daisy von Furth

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But that's just part of the education, because in the Armed Forces you'll receive the kinds of skills, training and on-the-job experience that pay off, today and tomorrow. So if you're interested in the Montgomery GI Bill, call your local Armed Forces recruiter today.

U.S. ARMED FORCES

I remember a couple of years ago talking to some lame major label A&R dude who was complaining that he couldn't get his completely worthless "alternative" band played on college radio. "They won't play anything that has commercial potential," he whined. "It's too bad, because college radio could be a good farm system for us." Precisely this attitude is what's killing independent music in this country.

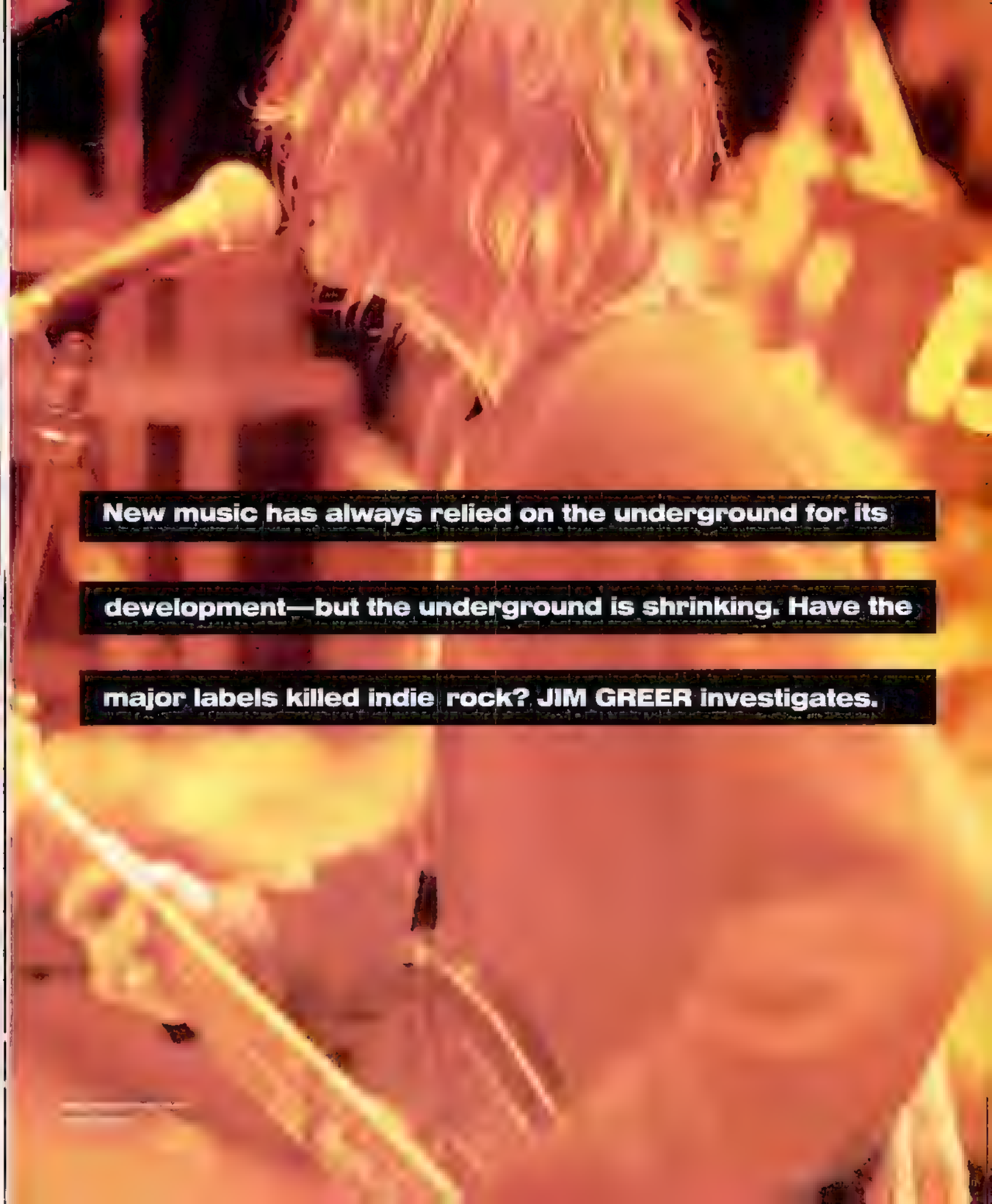
NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

SPIN spent a good chunk of 1991 trying to figure out where rock'n'roll was going or even where it was. Last August, you read about our country-wide search for the soul of rock, even though none of us knew exactly what we were looking for. And last month, in our year-end issue, you read how the alternative music scene has grown to the point where it's no longer the alternative anymore; it has in fact become part of the mainstream.

Which is both good and bad. No, rock isn't dead—if it were, there wouldn't be much point in this magazine—but it is, as Paul Westerberg said in our Soul of Rock'n' Roll issue, going underground. True innovation is being pushed farther and farther from the mainstream, while the mainstream itself expands to encompass fringes it once scarcely noticed. Five years ago the thought of Sonic Youth being on a major label would have been as unthinkable as it would have been undesirable; today it would seem a gross injustice if they weren't. And hell, why not—seems like the majors these days are buying up anything that moves, or at least moves noisily, as long as the band in question has some sort of independent credibility and/or following. This is good for the bands in the short run, and for some even in the long run, but the overall effect is hardly salutary, especially as it concerns the health of the independent system, which until now has developed and nurtured these bands.

Most likely, this mainstream bloat will deflate somewhat in the next couple of years as the majors realize that it's probably not a good idea to sign every half-assed jangly guitar rock band that comes their way. And

CHRIS CUFFARO



New music has always relied on the underground for its development—but the underground is shrinking. Have the major labels killed indie rock? JIM GREER investigates.

that's gonna come as a shock to a lot of bands who signed up thinking they'd have a few years or at least a couple of albums to find their step. There'll be a whole bunch of unemployed clumsy rhythm guitarists–poets in a couple of years—if you're planning on starting a band, you'll probably be able to pick one up real cheap.

Look, there's nothing inherently wrong with being on a major label: With the right contract, and a lot of these bands are getting the right contracts, it can be a vastly more effective means of sticking your muse under people's noses than any independent venture. For many bands it's actually a wonderful thing that they can have the money to make a proper album, have it properly distributed, and do a proper tour. And with the sums of money some of these labels are waving around you'd have to be a better man than me to turn them down. The problem's not that the majors are completely profit-driven—they should be, that's their raison d'être—but that they're stupid about it. Spending enormous amounts of money on unrealistic prospects puts impossible pressures on both the artists and the company. And treating the independent labels as a "farm system" only contributes to their swift demise.

Check out the facts: In May 1991, Rough Trade, one of the oldest and possibly largest independent distributors in the U.K. and this country, went bankrupt. Too-rapid expansion, the recession, unwise investment in its own label (paying marginal acts unreasonable advances in an effort to keep them from jumping ship to the majors), and a top-heavy staff were cited as major factors in Rough Trade's failure. The company owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to independent labels, resulting in a slew of layoffs and roster-trimmings at labels such as SST and Wax Trax. The largest remaining "independent" distributor, Important Records, is now half-owned by Sony. Caroline, another large distributor (it recently signed a production and distribution deal with Sub Pop Records), is partly owned by the Virgin Group.

Simply put, independent labels can no longer compete in a market they essentially created in the wake of punk's abortive stab at world domination in the mid- to late-'70s. Almost every major label now has an "alternative" marketing and promotions department with the money and staff to outgun the efforts of even the largest remaining independents. Many labels have found themselves forced to sell out to the majors in order to survive—and for a major label, it may sometimes be an easier thing to buy a label outright than to try to start up an alternative department from scratch.

What, after all, can an independent label offer an act that can't be matched or improved on by a major? It used to be that independents could give a greater degree of artistic control, but the contracts bands such as Teenage Fanclub and Nirvana are signing these days pretty much grant everything in that respect that a band could want (although it's difficult to imagine, for instance, DGC funding even a low-budget side project such as Sonic Youth's *The Whitey Album*—done under the pseudonym Ciccone Youth—just for kicks, the way Blast First/Enigma did). The only real advantage of being on an independent is the level of commitment on the part of the label to the artist. The word "development" is foreign to the lexicon of most major label A&R people—that's what they have the independents for: to develop the bands so they can snatch them right when they're beginning to break (i.e., actually make some money). It happened to Matador Records with Teenage Fanclub (*see story, page 36*), it happened to Sub Pop with Nirvana, and it happened to Wax Trax with a handful of acts. It happens all the time, and not all of the blame can be assigned to the majors. A lot of these bands are letting the prospect of short-term money outweigh the longer term interests of their careers. What good will it do them to take a couple of hundred grand from a major to make their first record? If that record doesn't sell, they're out the door.

Independent labels can no longer compete in a market they created. Almost every major label now has an "alternative" department with the money to outgun even the largest independents.

Spending money on unrealistic prospects puts impossible pressures on both the artists and the company. And treating independent labels as a "farm system" only contributes to their swift demise.

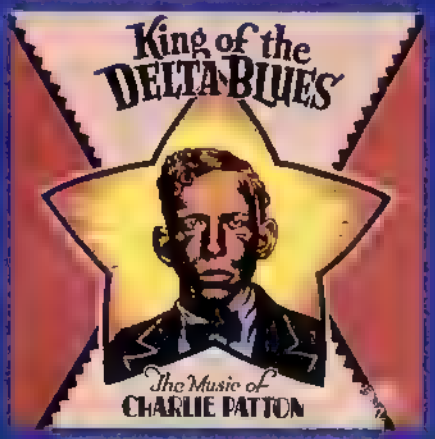
That said, there are a number of labels who remain staunchly independent and have even managed to thrive despite the rampant industrial disease. The aforementioned Matador and Sub Pop, Washington, D.C.'s Teen Beat and Dischord (home of indie diehards Fugazi), Calvin Johnson of Beat Happening's K Records, Touch and Go in Chicago, and North Carolina's Mammoth are just some of the labels that, though struggling, have managed to survive without selling out and as a result are at the forefront of the development of new music in this country in the '90s.

Which brings us to this year's New Music Preview. Sure, not all of these bands are on independent labels, but that's not the point, is it? These are our picks for some of the most important music being made today. You'll hear from these bands in the future because they are the future, and whether they decide to pursue their development in the mainstream arena or in one of its many subvenues, it's your choice whether to follow. And that's another point: one reason indie rock is in its present woeful state is because we, the consumers, have dropped the ball. Fact is, it's much harder to find independent releases than it is major label stuff, especially now that distribution is so iffy. You have to look beyond the retail chains to the mom-and-pop operations that stock these goodies. Sometimes, you have to write to the labels themselves and order from their catalogs. It's not easy, but if you love music—and you wouldn't be reading this if you didn't, would you?—you'll make the effort. The results will be worth it.

In the meantime, here're a few suggestions from which to start. Keep your ears peeled, pal. Go.

THE BIRTH OF THE BLUES

You've heard Robert Johnson, now hear what he heard. Step back into time to the Mississippi delta in the 1920s and hear the most powerful traditional blues ever recorded performed by musicians who are legendary figures. These two 23-track double-length/single-price albums compiled from extremely rare 78s from the 1920s and early 30s offer an in-depth perspective of the beginnings of the blues and their first formative styles.



CHARLIE PATTON
KING OF THE DELTA BLUES (Yazoo 2001)

Charlie Patton is considered by many to be the single most important figure in the history of traditional blues. He was a profound shaper and a giant figure in early Mississippi delta music. The combined power of his vocal and guitar dynamics is unparalleled, and he was the delta's first blues celebrity. His music evokes a sense of what the earliest, and most earthy blues stylings may have sounded like. Charlie Patton's legacy is an imposing body of powerful and eloquent music.

WARNING: OUR GENERAL SURGEON STATES THAT THE RARE ORIGINAL 78's USED TO PRODUCE THESE TWO ALBUMS CONTAIN SOME SURFACE NOISE, AND THAT THE MUSIC IS SO POWERFUL YOU SHOULD NOT PLAY BOTH ALBUMS IN THE SAME 24-HOUR PERIOD.

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REV. GARY DAVIS & SONNY TERRY (YAZOO 501)

Each video numerously captures the artists and their techniques, communicating the power and eloquence of American blues as played by its masters. Introductions by Taj Mahal.

Shanachie

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Discover a Whole New World of Music

YAZOO

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

HEAVEN CAN'T WAIT

Some things in life are beyond explanation. Lucky for you, the triumphant bliss-rock combo Nirvana isn't one of them.

LAUREN SPENCER exposes the men behind the myth.

Photographs by Greg Watermann

Return to your seats, buckle up, and say your prayers: Nirvana is on a collision course with the world. *Nevermind*, the band's first major-label release, has exploded unexpectedly on the charts while the band's public profile has expanded at a scary rate. With good reason. Remember the first time you heard a song or band that totally blissed you out? Well, this band takes you there. Nirvana lives up to its name—unless you don't believe in bliss, in which case I feel sorry for you.

The album has already gone gold, and is even outselling Guns N' Roses double *Use Your Illusion* at some record stores. And the band's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" video garnered the world-premiere slot on MTV's *120 Minutes*, practically unheard of for a band that had never had a video shown before on MTV. Everyone seems to be reaching for Nirvana.

Guitarist—lyricist—possibly tormented guy Kurt Cobain, bassist—maniac—really towering guy Chris Novoselic, and drummer—Virginia native—seriously fun guy Dave Grohl are forging a mighty sound. Spawned in the Pacific Northwest, Nirvana's music sounds like R.E.M. married to Sonic Youth, while having an affair with the Germs. Hole's Courtney Love describes it thus: "Nirvana is plowing a new playground for all of us to play in."

Success has come so quickly for the band that it has a tenuous handle on the realities of its rise to prominence. "I couldn't even tell you shit like when *Bleach* [Nirvana's first album, on Sub Pop] was released. I couldn't even name the songs on the album," says Cobain. "Our record-company bio is nothing but a huge lie. They wrote it up, but it was really lame—they called me at seven in the morning. In the end they just turned it over to us to write. So we made most of it up."

"You know what I think is great?" interjects Grohl. "The interviews in English magazines, because they sort of tidy up the grammar. You're free to tidy up any of our grammar. Just make us sound smart."

NIRVANA WAS FORMED IN 1987 BY ABERDEEN, WASHINGton, native Kurt Cobain, who lived his formative years in a trailer park with his cocktail-waitress mom and didn't listen to music until later in life. He hooked up with Novoselic, and they worked their way toward 1989's *Bleach*, which was made in three days for $600 and crammed with nihilistic, punk-tinged melodic rock. The band toured, got a record deal with DGC, saw *many* bootleg releases hit the streets, picked up drummer Grohl in 1990 from D.C.'s punk-hardcore band Scream, toured in Europe with Sonic Youth, put out *Nevermind*, and will probably be touring for the rest of its born days. That is, until they all go into hiding to escape the glare of the spotlight.

Cobain has been mislabeled as a "spokesman for a disaffected generation." He's not interested in the job. His lyrics have a sheen of naïveté that just barely contains his anger—but gems like "I feel stupid and contagious / Here we are now, entertain us," from "Smells Like Teen Spirit," come off more as glimpses into his private world than rallying cries to the masses.

"I really have no desire to read the lyrics my favorite rock stars write," says Cobain. "I don't pay attention. My favorite album this year was the Breeders' *Pod* [from 1990]. Actually, I lied—I do listen to Kim Deal's lyrics. But I don't really pay attention to what people write. Even interviews, I just take with a grain of salt. The only ones I've ever read that I really liked were ones with the Pixies and Butthole Surfers—other than that I can't think of any that I even finished."

When it comes to the band's own interviews, Cobain says, "We lead such boring lives that we start to make up stuff." But, as with any band that comes out of nowhere, stories will get made up anyhow. Example: A rumored contract signing with DGC for $750,000—which would have made it the largest indie signing in history—was, according to Cobain, "Journalism through hearsay. And then the numbers kept getting bigger so that a lot of people believed that we were signed for a million dollars." In fact, the band says the deal was for $250,000 spread over two records.

"And now we're snubbed by people who think we're big rock stars," says Grohl. "They think that when you get signed to a major label you get all this cash to spend."

"I didn't understand how the music business worked when I was young," adds Cobain. "I used to curse the Butthole Surfers for having fifteen-dollar ticket prices. Now I obviously understand it more, but it's just that with all these people paying attention it feels a little like being in the zoo. Maybe this could be the disclaimer article: What we're gonna do now is let the kids know that we haven't sold out."

From left: David Grohl, Kurt Cobain, and Chris Novoselic

"Like, from now on all our shows are gonna be free," says Grohl and laughs.

"And we'll play with Fugazi for vegetable scraps," says Cobain, only half joking. "We're never going to lose our punk ethic."

"We don't want to be just lackeys to the corporate ogre," laments Grohl.

They needn't worry. Although there *are* a wealth of colorful stories concerning the band's offstage shenanigans, Nirvana is hardly the product of record company–inspired, corporate rock–controlled rebellion. In other words, the band's antics are not a ploy for headline-grabbing attention—it's just the way they are. For instance, when MTV staged a pregig game of Twister in Boston between Nirvana, Smashing Pumpkins, and Bullet LaVolta, Cobain greased up Novoselic's nearly nude body with Crisco oil after which the bassist used an American flag hanging on the wall to wipe himself off. "These jocks came up and were really bad-vibing me," says Novoselic. "Like, 'Hey, you don't do that to our American flag.' So I ended up having some kind of bodyguard go with me to the club."

When Nirvana did a Tower Records in-store appearance this fall in New York, a plate of roast beef sandwiches was thoughtfully provided for the occasion, which gave rise to this potential quote of the year: "I thought these guys were an alternative band, but they're eating meat."

Nirvana shows are rife with churning, smashing, moving, sweaty ecstasy onstage and off. To witness the end of some sets is to understand why the band *cannot* do an encore—there's very little equipment left intact.

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

"Poseurs."

There's more. Cobain has thoroughly confused his record company by using multiple choice in the spelling of his name: *Kurdt*, *Curt*, and *Kurt*; *Cobain* or *Kobain*. Real and imagined stories run rampant of tour bus curtains being lit on fire, drunken backstage debaucheries, Grohl giving out Chris Cornell's (actually Sub Pop's) phone number during an on-air interview, their road manager's being questioned in Pittsburgh because of a torched couch in the club, the band inviting hundreds of audience members onstage during a St. Louis show to escape the violent bouncers, and on and on.

Never mind the stories—to see is to believe. Live, these guys kick substantial ass. Nirvana shows are rife with churning, smashing, moving, sweaty ecstasy onstage and off. To witness the end of some sets is to understand why they *cannot* do an encore—there's very little equipment left intact. They are adamant about playing only all-ages shows, to the point of adding an extra gig in Boston when they found out the show they performed at was *not* open to everyone. But they also pissed off a Philadelphia crowd by not doing an encore, provoking chants of "sellout." With or without encores, at the end of the day Nirvana still gives it to its audience full force. It helps that the band members have had ample time on the road, because there the audience is your best friend—without them you're totally on your own.

"Most of the time earlier on we'd stay at people's houses that we'd just met," says Cobain.

"But I remember one time in Texas on our first tour we slept at the edge of a lake where there were signs all over saying beware of alligators. We all slept with baseball bats by our sides, or we tried to sleep. In the middle of the night we thought we saw one so we bagged out."

COBAIN'S GOT A TATTOO ON HIS ARM. IT'S THE K Records symbol, representing the Olympia, Washington, indie label run by Beat Happening's Calvin Johnson. This summer Johnson helped stage the International Pop Underground Convention, where, unlike other so-called new music conventions, they really did showcase only new talent, along with holding barbecues, parades, and disco dances. It's very pure.

Cobain says, "It's the event of the year. I vowed months ago that nothing was going to get in the way of me attending it—but unfortunately this year we missed it because we played the Reading Festival in England. But I've had the tattoo since last summer. It was a home job. Dave taught me."

"You can do it with just a regular sewing needle, string, and some India ink," instructs Grohl. "Wrap the thread around the needle, dip it in the ink, and jab it in."

"But when I did it, the thread unraveled," says Cobain. "So I ended up jabbing in the needle and pouring ink all over my arm."

"Tips to keep yourself busy," adds Grohl.

Beyond home tattoos, Nirvana is waiting for the day when its record company, DGC, home to a slew of rock up-and-comers, holds a picnic so the band members can hang with its fellow label

Nirvana's Kurt Cobain wants to be your friend.

mates—especially Nelson. Sonic Youth got a head start in the Nelson stakes when the band visited the blond boys on tour last year, but this trio has a bolder tribute in mind.

"Nelson have a room they go into before each show where they turn off the lights and meditate with incense burning," Grohl says.

"So we're gonna have the Nelson room where we burn effigies of them before we go onstage," adds Cobain.

"Kinda like the Satan room," Grohl concludes.

Obviously signing with a major has not put a stop to Nirvana's fun. Instead, it has served the purpose of allowing more people to share the noise. Their T-shirts sum it up. The latest version proudly sports the slogan: KITTY PETTIN, FLOWER SNIFFIN, BABY KISSIN CORPORATE ROCK WHORES. Recently a DGC employee, who was wearing a "crack-smokin' " version of the shirt at a cash machine in L.A., was asked by the long arm of the law to turn the shirt inside out because it was offending passers-by.

To some of the great unwashed, Nirvana's favorite bands remain obscurities: the Vaselines, a Scottish band whose tune "Molly's Lips" often starts off Nirvana's live sets, and the Japanese all-female pop trio Shonen Knife, who will be touring with them in Europe. And of course molasses-metal kings The Melvins—whose drummer Dale Crover played on *Bleach*'s "Paper Cuts" and "Floyd the Barber" and did a brief stint on the road with them in the pre-Grohl period—hold a special place in their hearts.

"There is no band that changed my perspective of music like the Melvins," says Grohl. "I'm not joking. I think they're the future of music."

"And the present and past," adds Cobain. "They should get recognized for that."

As Nirvana begins to plot out its quest for world domination, a scheme involving a certain metal-titan outfit is hatched.

"We'll rub elbows with Metallica. That way they'll wear our T-shirts and we'll become an instant success," says the forward-looking Cobain.

Like they need any help.

On second thought, Cobain adds, "We've gotta get Kirk Hammett a Melvins T-shirt."

"Yeah, because there's nothing heavier than the Melvins," says Grohl.

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NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

TEENAGE FANCLUB

STEVEN DALY meets the band responsible for SPIN's 1991 album of the year.

How could we do it? they said. How could SPIN's editors squander their coveted end-of-year garlands on an album by this bunch of ragged-assed Scottish slackers? Simple Because in rock's darkest hour, as U2 lost its clue and G N' R lost their nerve, Teenage Fanclub whipped out one of those blazing, defiant statements that can restore your faith in a dying form; in short, the best record by white people in recent memory.

Produced by B.A.L.L.–Velvet Monkeys guru Don Fleming, *Bandwagonesque* is a thing of staggering beauty—it literally sounds as if the band was staggering when they recorded it, drunk on pure devotion to rock'n'roll. From the first fuzzy note of "The Concept," Teenage Fanclub submerges you in a rush of instant warmth and familiarity, the amniotic swell of distortion shot through with timeless melodies and peerless harmonies. If it weren't for a pair of ill-advised instrumentals, there wouldn't be any room for improvement. Lyrically, *Bandwagonesque* has an altogether more romantic tenor than its sometimes cynical predecessor, TFC's debut, *A Catholic Education*

"It is kind of romantic, but it's more hopelessly romantic rather than anything else," allows bassist and co–front man Gerry Love, repentantly sipping a glass of milk in a Glasgow café. "It's all about wanting things that you can't really get, but I think it is more positive than the last one, yeah."

Teenage Fanclub's obsessions, it would seem, can be narrowed down to the basics. rock'n'roll and girls.

"Well, I think three of us are obsessed by three particular females; and Brendan is obsessed with, like, *any* females. The typical drummer, y'know?" smirks Gerry. Right on cue, Brendan O'Hare enters and slumps into his seat. Turns out the hedonistic stick man's proudly smarting from his first tattoo, a Sun Ra eye on the left shoulder blade.

I WADE THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN OF positive press garnered by TFC in the last couple of years, and nowhere will you find the band's essence more adroitly defined than by its new U S. publicist. The thing about the Fanclub, he informs me, is that all the band's songs contain "the chord that makes you cry."

These words of wisdom are delivered in the New York conference room of the David Geffen Company, as the Geffmeister's tasteful wall fittings rattle to the ragged glory of a *Bandwagonesque* DAT thundering out at volume 11. The events leading to Teenage Fanclub's arrival at its plush new home could hardly be more emblematic of the plight of independent labels in America today (*see story, page 28*). After releasing the highly acclaimed *A Catholic Education* on New York indie Matador and doing a short, high-impact tour of the U S , the quartet found that its stock had risen immeasurably, and that it had become the subject of frantic courtship rituals from numerous multinationals.

That much of the story seems certain. Interpretation of subsequent events depends on whose version you choose to believe. The way Matador majordomo Gerard Cosloy sees it, he was simply left high and dry the second the band sniffed the majors' filthy lucre. For its part, though reluctant to be drawn on the subject, Teenage Fanclub insists that the label's accounting procedures left more than a little to be desired.

Since the path to Geffen was one already beaten by the band's buddies Sonic Youth, the canny Scots retained the services of the Youth's lawyer, former rock critic Richard Grabel. Much of the Fanclub-Geffen pact was, therefore, closely modeled on the hard-won clauses of those East Village scuzz kings.

Whatever the claims and counterclaims, the ensuing divorce from Matador was an ugly one, with the label getting a settlement in the mid-five figures and a half-hearted album of instrumentals, *The King*, to fulfill contractual obligations. Ironically, after a limited U K. pressing, this "musical folly" will remain a prized collector's item, never to see the light of day in this country.

The bottom line of this unseemly episode is that the small firm that first rolled the dice on Teenage Fanclub will never see a proper return on its investment, while the mighty David Geffen Company will propel the outfit into at least the upper echelons of alternative rock stardom.

I NEXT CATCH UP WITH TEENAGE FANCLUB ON THE grim streets of East London, where the band is shooting a video for "The Concept." As the twilight rain swirls around rooftops once familiar to Jack the Ripper, any feeling of corporate largesse is notably absent.

The presence in the director's chair of former Jesus and Mary Chain drummer Douglas Hart is somewhat resonant here, since TFC emerged from the same Glasgow scene that spawned the Mary Chain and its Primal Scream offshoot. While the latter outfit has been lauded for its late leap into modernism, Teenage Fanclub's stoic classicism marked it as a band out of step with the times. This fact was brought graphically home to singer-guitarist Norman Blake when he chanced upon one of his own compositions on a British indie compilation album.

"Every record had a dance beat except ours, it's really bizarre," he marvels. "I'm not saying that's good or bad, I'm just saying . . . it's really weird I think it's more to do with fashion than it is with anything else."

Nor does Teenage Fanclub feel much affinity with the currently voguish "oceanic" rock of Ride, Lush, and My Bloody Valentine. Notes Gerry, "Year zero for those bands is 1986 or 1987; their influences only go back as far as the Cocteau Twins and the Jesus and Mary Chain. But I think all the best music was made before then, from the mid-'60s to the early '80s."

"We like all kinds of stuff, I mean, like Cole Porter, y'know?" enthuses Norman, laughing

"Any contemporary bands I listen to are mostly American," Gerry continues "In America, there's always good rock bands who aren't neccesarily trying to change things in any way—Sonic Youth, Nirvana, Dinosaur Jr. I prefer things you can play on acoustic guitar and they sound just as good as they do on record; songs rather than grooves."

Teenage Fanclub evinces an impressively thoroughbred lineage, effectively recalling the loose-limbed momentum of *Zuma*-era Crazy Horse, Brian Wilson's lachrymose lushness, and the desolate lyricism of prime Alex Chilton. In the last case, though, the band has been accused of taking homage a little too far

' 'Well, yeah, maybe a couple of tracks on the LP have the same kind of atmosphere as some of Big Star's songs," admits Gerry. "But I wouldn't say that of any of the other tracks. And people tend to forget that *they* were derivative too, influenced by the Byrds, the Beatles, the Stones, and black soul music as *we* are by Big Star. That's why I like them so much, because I can identify where they're coming from—I don't like 'new music.' I like being able to find reference points and trace them back."

Lately, Gerry has gone to greater lengths to avoid the taint of contemporary influence. "I've started going to the the best club in Glasgow: the Grand Ole Opry. There's no pretentiousness there, just everyone having a good time. All these butchers and dustbin men dressing up as cowboys—it's brilliant."

KEVIN WESTENBERG

From left: Dan Pearson, Tim Mooney, Vudi, Bruce Kaphan, and Mark Eitzel.

NICOLE SAPONARA

AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB

American Music Club has long been hailed by critics as a band of geniuses. With the band's new release, *Everclear*, the rest of the world is finally paying attention. JOHAN KUGELBERG checks out the requirements for membership.

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

Becoming a financially successful band is a hell of a lot more difficult than becoming an artistic success. Look at American Music Club, a band that has been the darling of critics and connoisseurs since its first album in 1986 and has a fanatical cult following in England while being almost unknown in the U.S. This is not that uncommon for independent American bands. What's kind of strange, in a pleasant way, is that it looks like AMC is about to become the big deal it deserves to be here in the good ol' U.S. of A.

Lead vocalist and songwriter Mark Eitzel has gotten himself a reputation for being one of the most emotional and intense live performers in rock these days, comparable to Van Morrison for vocal timbre, and George Jones or Hank Williams for sheer emotional force. The band's strength as a unit is clear once you've experienced American Music Club live. None of the brilliance of the arrangements and production of the albums gets lost live, which is something quite rare in this day and age. Talking to the band at a bar on New York's Lower East Side made it clear that AMC is a band content with what it's doing and where it's heading.

The lineup is an interesting hybrid of musical backgrounds—guitarist Vudi and bassist Dan Pearson's beginings are rooted in country and western, counteracting vocalist Mark Eitzel and drummer Tim Mooney's roots in the late-'70s/early-'80s punk rock of the "San Francisco fake-bohemian" variety. AMC's songs are all penned by Mark Eitzel and arranged by the band together.

Discussing their new album, *Everclear*, and the latest (of several) waves of hype washing over them, AMC's members come across as being aware of their situation; they're certainly not desperate to "make it."

"It's happened before," says bass player Dan Pearson. "Three years ago people were saying that 'it' was about to happen, but I don't know what that 'it' is really. We're just about breaking even on this tour, and this is the first time that we don't have to pay for our own food. It's really nice, though, to come to a city like Detroit where we've never played before and there's like 300 people waiting to see us."

Everclear, the band's fifth album to date, has sold far more than any of AMC's previous titles and the crowds at its shows have increased steadily. Comparing *Everclear* with earlier American Music Club albums, it becomes apparent that some of the rough edges of previous discs have been trimmed away, replaced by a sound best described as Roxy Music's *Avalon* with hints of Nashville thrown in. *Everclear* is also the first disc without longtime drummer, engineer, and producer Tom Allen, who left the band before its recording.

Says guitarist Vudi, "Tom called the shots on the previous records. Musically it was his vision, he told us when our ideas were stupid and wouldn't work. This record is a lot more democratic than anything we've ever made. Tom would not have been into anything as commercial sounding as 'Rise.'"

"Rise," the first single off *Everclear*, has received exhaustive airplay on college radio and become the introduction to AMC for a lot of people previously unfamiliar with the band. According to Mark Eitzel, "It's weird. A friend of mine said that people have been finding out about the band through a cousin or something, sending them a tape of some songs, and then they like it and search out all the old stuff, but now we see people at shows who don't know any of the old songs, and that's really nice!"

According to Eitzel approximately 15 new songs are written for the next album and they hope to go into the studio this spring. That's after AMC returns from its European tour, which begins this January. And since *Everclear* is being released in Germany, France, and the U.K., the tour will mean playing larger clubs to more people than ever before.

No other contemporary American rock'n'roll band is as moving and rewarding to listen to or see live. Breath of fresh air, drink of spring water, you name it. American Music Club is not easy listening—it's moody and angry and sad like the harshest punk song or the prettiest country ballad. But there is a beauty and strength that's definitely worth your time and attention.

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

SUPERCHUNK

Unlike many of the band's indie-rock counterparts, Superchunk is not a bunch of puffy nerds who wear glasses or scuzzy junkie wannabes with BO. Laura Ballance, the band's modest and shy bassist has become, much to her horror, the Julia Roberts of the underground. New York hate rockers Surgery even wrote a song, "Dear Sweet Laura," immortalizing her as a dreadlocked southern beauty queen. Maybe that's why she recently chopped off all her hair. Superchunk's members are fashion forward, rejecting the flannel and black jeans uniform. They're leaders in the corduroy revolution that is fast sweeping the nation, and lead singer and guitarist Mac McCaughan proudly claims that he and Laura have ten pairs each (including cord cutoffs) in various earth tones.

Laura Ballance *left*, and Mac McCaughan.

Superchunk's music is free of calculation; guitarist Jim Wilbur attributes the band's signature "chunky" guitar sound to broken tubes in his amp. Mac describes Superchunk as "melodic punk," the *melodic* coming from bands such as the Buzzcocks, the *punk* coming from his days as a hardcore enthusiast. The band hopes the Dinosaur Jr. comparisons will cease with the release of its new Matador record, *No Pocky for Kitty*, with its pared-down guitar sound, thanks to producer Steve Albini.

Superchunk is good folk. "We're pretty cuddly. They call it Muppet rock," explains Jim. "No matter how loud the guitar is and how much you jump around and sweat and get angst-ridden, eventually you have to go home, be polite, and kiss your mother on the cheek." They are serious about music, with a sense of integrity and genuine interest in the indie scene that has led Mac and Laura to spawn their own small label, Merge. They can talk for hours on the demise of vinyl and the rise and fall of the seven-inch.

Yet the band's members aren't blowhards rigidly standing on principle. Although they're wary of major-label offers (they're happy where they are), that didn't stop them from doing the music for a British Knights commercial. If they didn't do it, the ad agency would've gone and hired studio musicians to ape their sound; Superchunk decided it had nothing to lose. "It helped pay for our new van so I don't feel like we whored ourselves too badly," says the sensible Mac; they got free sneakers, too.

Michael Stipe recently went to one of the band's shows and even bought a T-shirt—yet another admirer of Superchunk's fresh-faced, straightforward punk rock.

DAISY VON FURTH

MAIN SOURCE

Driving around Toronto with Canadian rappers Dream Warriors last year, one tape blasted through the speakers throughout the day: *Breaking Atoms*, the overlooked debut by hip hop masters Main Source. Interviewing the Dream Warriors ceased, all talk stopped; at that moment, Main Source was the only thing on our minds. Although DJs K-Cut and Sir Scratch hail from Toronto, it wasn't only hometown allegiance that kept *Atoms* in the deck. It was the fact that—along with third member Large Professor—the band had assembled a strong, smooth, singular debut, full of inventive samples and perceptive lyrics.

"Just a Friendly Game of Baseball" took hip hop metaphor to a new height, cannily equating police brutality against blacks with good ol' American sportsmanship. The funky, jazz-tinged tracks cruise along, crammed with genre-turning ideas: "Watch Roger Do His Thing" tells the story of a ghetto child who finds success—by studying, not by playing a sport or selling drugs, "Looking Out the Front Door," the group's breakout single, recounts the breakup of a relationship with sensitivity and sophistication—disillusionment has never been this danceable. Able to bridge the personal and the political, Main Source aims to experiment with different forms—sometimes with the inspired use of real instruments.

K-Cut and Scratch discovered rap after moving to Queens, New York, in the late '70s. They met up with member Large Professor in high school and a team was born. Large Professor went on to do studio work for Roxanne Shanté and Kool G Rap, and the trio worked together on tracks for Queen Latifah. The three may come from different places, but as far as music is concerned, they're in the same tribe. And it was clear that they wanted "to come up with a whole new joint." Blending jazz and pop and reggae licks, Main Source created a sound that transcends the usual hip hop sonic clichés with wit, innovation, and style.

SCOTT POULSON-BRYANT

From left: K-Cut, Large Professor, and Sir Scratch.

LEFT: MARY ROBINSON

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

From left: Jay Yuenger, Ivan DePrume, Sean Yseult, and Rob Zombie.

PAMELA SPRINGSTEEN/LOCATION: RAPHAEL STUDIOS

WHITE ZOMBIE

They look like total mutants amid the polyester stretch pants and cheap cameras of Tourist Central—Mann's Chinese Theater on Hollywood Boulevard—but they don't care.

The members of White Zombie were once a New York noise band but never felt comfortable in that scene. "It was just too arty for us," says lead singer Rob Straker. "When we started, I hadn't even heard of the bands we were supposedly ripping off. We just *sucked*, and [people were saying], 'Those kids are making a heavy statement.' We were just noisy and stupid and having fun."

In loading up the truck and moving to Hollywood, White Zombie has finally become one with the source of its true inspirations. Horror movies. Serial killers. All things lurid, grotesque, and garish. Theirs is a cheerfully malevolent universe, powered by big, bombastic metal and ominous grunge.

"In one day, we got a Jacuzzi, saw Mamie Van Doren's bra [at the Frederick's of Hollywood Bra Museum] and Ivan [DePrume, drummer] chased girls at the Cathouse! What more can you say? It's L.A.! We have free cable!" says Rob.

The title of their Geffen debut album, *La Sexorcisto: Devil Music Vol.1*, makes them an instant target for the folks who sue rock bands after their kids commit suicide, but the Zombies aren't worried. "We should be so lucky that lunatics should want to bother promoting our record," says Rob. "There really are backward messages on our record," Sean adds with a grin. "But we're not telling what they are."

The guys from White Zombie are walking down Hollywood Boulevard, loving every trashy vulgar step. They buy a map of the star's homes. They check out Dracula's coffin at the Hollywood Costume Museum. Mainly, they want their record to sell enough copies so they don't ever have to have day jobs again. Reasons Sean, "We live in Hollywood now, so if all else fails we can commit some tragic suicide in the Jacuzzi."

DAINA DARZIN

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

HELMET

New York City's Helmet doesn't have time to waste. Page Hamilton is fully occupied with his stark songsmithing and cathartic vocalizing; bassist Henry Bogdan and drummer John Stanier with their mechanistic bludgeoning; Peter Mengede with his terse exoskeletal six-stringings. Simple not stupid, repetitive not repetitious, Helmet's music forces monolithic power into tightly compressed infrastructures. If scientists should ever go in search of musical molecules of infinite density, odds are they'll wind up at Helmet's SoHo practice space.

"It's very focused," Hamilton explains. "With Helmet, I knew what I wanted to do and I knew what I *didn't* want to do. A lot of younger bands don't assert any discipline upon themselves and the music suffers for it."

Hamilton's no hypocrite. Helmet's "discipline" is not only evident in its music, but in the ceaseless regimen of its two-and-a-half-year existence. After its debut 45-inch released by Amphetamine Reptile in 1989, the band followed up with tracks on two compilation albums and a full-length LP, 1990's *Strap It On*, released in between. This touched off rigorous intercontinental touring and an appearance on Britain's Peel Sessions.

If *Strap It On* was an abrasive primer on the effects of New York's tension on hypersensitive transplants—Hamilton and Bogdan hail from Oregon, Stanier from Florida, Mengede from Brisbane, Australia—Helmet's newest release, "Unsung"/"Your Head," is what happens when the flexors are loosened ever so slightly. Where *Strap It On* brutally condensed your spinal column, this material realizes the significance of the spaces between the vertebrae.

STEVE MARTIN

From left: **Page Hamilton, John Stanier, Peter Mengede, and Henry Bogdan.**

PAVEMENT

You know how it is, or maybe you don't—sifting through piles of inferior records, tapes, and CDs on your desk, week after week, and then you come across something so incredibly, amazingly wonderful it restores your faith in free dental care or something. Well, not to wax transcendental or anything, but the first time I heard Pavement's new LP, *Slanted and Enchanted*, all the little hairs on the back of my neck stood at attention. My SPIN office mate, Jonathan Bernstein, says Pavement sounds like Ray Davies being sick. I think he means it as an insult (you can never tell with Scottish people), but you and I both know what a truly fine thing that would be.

SM, *far left*, and Spiral Stairs.

Pavement's meager output has to this date included three seven-inch singles (one on its own label) and a ten-inch EP on an obscure Chicago label (Drag City), as well as its debut LP, *Slanted*, which is soon to be released on Matador Records. The band was formed in 1988 by members SM and Spiral Stairs.

These boys don't seem eager to spend much time bathed in limelight. During the band's short existence, Pavement has never even taken a band photo. Half of the band lives on the West Coast, and half on the East, which must make rehearsals a bitch.

Trying to describe Pavement's music can be a bit like trying to describe a sunset; there are a lot of colors in the band's sound. The same ones that color bands such as Swell Maps, to be sure, early TV Personalities, yeah, and there's a bit of peak Velvets in there as well. Thing is, all these "influences" are mashed and stretched so thoroughly it's hard to pick out any one in particular. What comes out is kind of like a great big ball of varicolored Play-Doh forced through one of those star-shaped Play-Doh holes. Rainbowed and seamless, but still rough-edged.

Then, of course, there's the static thing. A lot of Pavement songs are recorded through a thin wall of static. The sound drifts in and out, giving you an unfocused feeling that can be slightly disorienting—probably just what the band intended. Pavement is not a smooth ride, but the bumps won't hurt you. They're just there to see if you can still feel anything.

JIM GREER

FAR LEFT EZEL

INGRID CHAVEZ

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

Maybe I'm just kidding myself but I do believe that as an artist I am independent of Prince, and that shows through in my writing and the way I've chosen to direct my career. And I *am* the director of my career."

It's a tough business when you have to disassociate yourself from a kindred spirit in order to assert your own individuality; but for Ingrid Chavez, who came to prominence as Prince's Yoko figure (their chance meeting is documented on *Lovesexy*'s sleeve-note shoutout: "The spirit child on various songs is Ingrid"), the breaking of ties has been a necessary maneuver. "I'd been in Minneapolis for two years before meeting Prince," she's quick to attest. "Even after I met him it was never, Okay, I've met Prince, now I can get a record deal."

Chavez's thoroughly beguiling debut sets a collection of sweet and sinuous grooves against her wistful murmur, a combination too potent to follow the well-worn Paisley Park path to ignominy, a route of which she is entirely aware ("I tossed and turned for a year on this deal"). However, Chavez—who's far more earthbound than the spiritual aerobicist suggested by titles such as "Sad Puppet Dance" and "Whispering Dandelions"—wields industry clout through her writing credits on Natural Selection's "Do Anything" and, belatedly, on Madonna's "Justify My Love." The sometimes dippy gamine remains sanguine on the subject of Lenny Kravitz's initial amnesia regarding her participation in that tune. "It made me realize that what I do is good enough for people like Madonna, Lenny, not just Prince, to take and embrace and admire and appreciate. It sort of made my record company take a second look at me, like, Whoa, wait a second, what's going on here? I didn't realize she was that good."

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN

MICHAEL LAVINE

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THE HIGHER THE PERFORMANCE,

Compare Maxell's XLII-S to an ordinary cassette. An obvious difference is the size of the windows. Keep in mind that there are no bay windows in rockets, but in houseboats there are.

That tiny little slit allowed us room to build extra support into the cassette shell for greater rigidity and durability.

The shell itself is a compound of ceramic and polymer resins.

With 1.4 times the specific gravity of standard cassette shell material, it's anti-resonant, absorbs vibrations that can often lead to modulation noise.

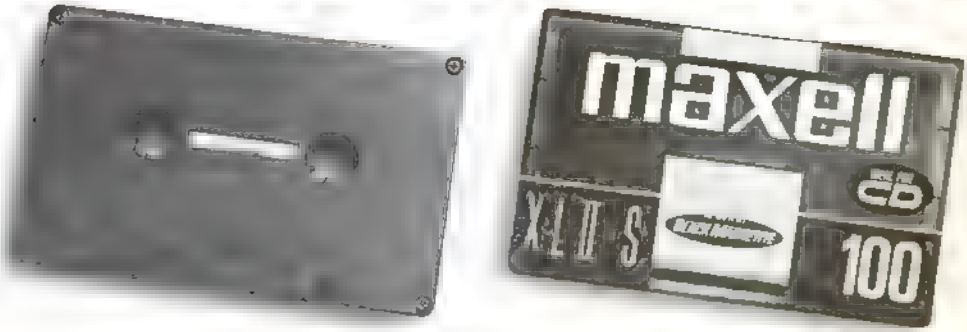
Inside, the tape is formulated with Black Magnetite—a higher energy magnetic material harnessed by Maxell engineers. It contributes to the sound *CD Review* magazine described like this: "Bass response that doesn't stop, staggering dynamics, real music." And in their review

THE SMALLER THE WINDOWS.

of Type II tapes, they rated XLII-S, "Head, shoulders and torso above the rest."

Of course, an XLII-S cassette is going to cost you more than one with big, low-performance windows and matching sound.

But not so much more that you have to go to Congress for it.



TAKE YOUR MUSIC TO THE MAX.

From left: Jeff Biegert, Will Ragano, Peter Moore, Paul Lanctot, and Krishna Venkatesh.

THINK TREE

Revising new genre labels in these dwindling days of alternative rock's brief and perhaps inconsequential reign is an arduous task. Think Tree, a Boston-based quintet started in 1987, learned a hard lesson by way of a misnomer when it released *Eight/Thirteen* last year on its own label. Pigeonholed as "industrial," the band's technosplatter approach to pop craft had people confused. Similarly disjointed, the band's new album, *Like the Idea* (Caroline), sounds at times like Captain Beefheart, David Bowie, and George Clinton. "That's what I feel is truly being an alternative band at this stage of the game," says lead vocalist Peter Moore. "Because you can be an alternative band, you can be an industrial band—you can be a weird fuckin' ass band, and the majors sign it. It's not really like it was ten years ago." Which is twice fortunate since Think Tree, with its dual keyboardists (Paul Lanctot and Krishna Venkatesh) and electronically charged drummer (Jeff Biegert), wouldn't have been possible a decade previous.

"Myself and Paul have samplers," explains Venkatesh. "And we've been able to get enough memory where we store all the samples and play them manually. Most industrial bands that tour, you see them in Chicago and you go see them in L.A. the next week, and its pretty much the same show. Whereas this, like a traditional rock band, will vary." For the past four years Think Tree has toured with a sound most have been surprised to hear coming from a live band. There are no prerecorded tracks, no sequencers, and yet the band percolates like an overly efficient kitchen appliance. "It always shocks people," Moore says, "to see that much stuff from a band they haven't heard of." Fortunately, the band remains a neck's length ahead of its time. After all, Think Tree has created a new genre (or at least, I've come up with a stupid label for it). Start listening to "environ-metal"—it's the right thing to do.

ALEC FOEGE

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

WEEN

As you read this, the duo of Brother Dean and Brother Gene, who make up the goon-rock band Ween, are probably at their horse farm making music that is near perfect. More than likely, one or both of them is sick with something.

One thing is certain: They are miserable. Their misery doesn't stem from lack of recognition or some deep-seated sense of ennui. It is the misery of the possessed.

Imagine this: Seven years ago, teenagers Gene and Dean are sitting in Mom's house, performing some mock white-bread cabalistic ritual. A demon god appears unto them and they are scared half to death. Before they can haul ass out of the room and down to the kitchen, they have breathed his spirit in. And then, it's over.

This, I swear to you, is true. They were cursed. Since then, Dean has became one of this planet's greatest living guitar players—his Mustang bleeds hate, love, soul, and sweat; and Gene has the voice of angels stuffed down his throat. The two of them have no choice but to write the songs of their existence.

Ween is one band that cannot be overhyped or overpraised. To keep it criminally short: The two have been Ween since they were 14 and have recorded over 1,000 songs. They have done about six albums in the past two years but their first official release, *God Ween Satan: The Oneness* (Twin/Tone), didn't come out until last year. It should be sought out by anyone who likes rock music. The cover's pink.

One of this planet's greatest living guitar players, Brother Dean, *left*; and Brother Gene.

Ween is worshiped by many famous people who have been featured in this mag. Anyone who has seen Ween live and didn't laugh is something less than human and probably not fun to hang out with.

Check out Ween, and everything else is weak by comparison.

MATT SWEENEY

From left: Jean-Pierre Barda, La Camilla, and Alexander Bard.

ARMY OF LOVERS

The first thing you should know about the guys in Army of Lovers is that they are *very irresponsible people*. I was supposed to interview them in Philly on the set of the USA Network's *Dance Party USA* (which is much wilder than MTV's dance show or that Nia Peeples thing, by the way), and I had to brave a crowd of half-naked rich Philbilly brats who all want to be models some day, and these rude jerks *didn't show up*. They canceled and stayed in New York instead, but nobody warned me! So I didn't get to ask 'em any investigative journalism questions about how they timidly changed the name of their hot Swede property, *Disco Extravaganza*, to something more autonomous when they released it stateside.

Obviously, they have something to hide! Or maybe they just missed their train—who knows. Anyway, the important aesthetic stuff about the Lovers is that they're a quartet that look both grimy and glam, like Deee-Lite having a Raging Slab flashback, and they play real disco like house music never happened

TOP: MICHAEL LAVINE CENTER: MICHAEL MACIOCE

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

UNREST

Three days after the death of Redd Foxx I spoke with Mark Robinson of the Washington, D.C., band Unrest, whose grief did not preclude rational assessment of the actor's achievements. "*Sanford and Son* was a good show, but I liked *Good Times* and *What's Happening!!* much more," he commented and then shifted to talk of Sammy Davis, Jr., of whom Robinson speaks with quiet reverence as "the ultimate performer."

Unrest started out in 1983: "We played mostly instrumentals," Robinson says, summarizing the band's early work as "some stuff kind of like Flipper, then loungy disco songs, and your occasional folk song." Asked about musical influences, he mentions the Hampton Grease Band, an Atlanta combo who "recorded a double album [*Music to Eat*] for Columbia in 1970 that sold about three copies; they sound exactly like the Butthole Surfers."

From left: Bridget, Phil, and Mark.

Flaunting a bizarre postpunk-disco sensibility and a hardcore punk joke as a name, Unrest hasn't made things easy for an audience only beginning to learn from Sonic Youth that rock can be as aware of pop artifice as disco or rap.

After a wholesome bowling date with Camper Van Beethoven, one nubile cue ball head slips into the back room to get busy with Unrest on a recent seven-inch called "Yes She Is My Skinhead Girl" (K Records). The song is dripping honey, the dazed postcoital buzz of a drone bumblebee in love with his queen, and it gives a taste of the pleasures to be found on Unrest's new LP, *Imperial* (No. 6 Records), on which Robinson—along with Bridget Cross and Phil Krauth on bass and drums, respectively—purvey ten tracks of obscene bubble gum, pumped-up jangle, funky percussive instrumentals, and breathtaking vocal beauty. The title cut, a mysterious tribute to the abstract painter Isabel Bishop (who lived in New York in the 1920s and whose work decorates *Imperial*), is a tour-de-force of an altogether different sort from "Yes She Is My Skinhead Girl." Unrest is ready to bring some much-needed style to a world lacking Sammy.

IVAN KREILKAMP

BLAKE BABIES

The Blake Babies give expression to the idea that girls are, as a general rule, smarter and cooler than boys. If this possibility has never occurred to you, you will probably find the band insufferable.

Since the 1989 release of *Earwig* and last year's polished follow-up, *Sunburn*, the Boston-bred Blake Babies—singer and bassist Juliana Hatfield, guitarist John Strohm, and drummer Freda Love—have made a name for themselves on college-rock playlists with memorable little pop songs about the shortcomings of romantic relationships, told from a female perspective. As the main lyricist and vocalist, the unpretentious, moodily pretty, and talented Hatfield dominates the group. Her precocious, childish voice jumps from one end of a wide emotional register to another with whines, giggles, and cries, while still holding on to delicate pop melodies. Hatfield's special fuel is *esprit de l'escalier*, those clever, biting one-liners that occur when it's too late to use them. A lot of the songs are addressed to boys who aren't listening anymore, or who need to be shaken up, as in *Sunburn*'s "I'm Not Your Mother." On *Sunburn*'s "Sanctify," Hatfield delivers the slogan "Kick a boy and teach him how to cry." But the mood is usually more complicated. On "Look Away," the aggressive "I get along without you when you look away" is followed by a grasping "I dream up things about you when you look away."

Strohm, who also writes and sings, provides an edge of his own. As the band has evolved, he has managed to reconcile the jangly Peter Buck–R.E.M. strain of alternative-rock guitar with the noisy feedback perfected by Sonic Youth and Dinosaur Jr.

Even the way that the members of the band talk about their work together trafficks in self-analysis and psychologizing. Says Strohm, "The band is partly an expression of our personal tensions. We're only now really figuring out how to listen to each other when playing live." Meanwhile, Strohm and Love have formed another band, Antenna, and have an upcoming album, *Sway*, and Hatfield may metamorphose into a rock babe with her March solo release, *Hey Babe*. As for the Babies themselves, their new album is due out in the late spring.

NATHANIEL WICE

"Love seeketh only self to please / To bind another to its delight." *From left*: Juliana Hatfield, John Strohm, and Freda Love.

but everything else did. They sing about space travel, use interplanetary effects, sing in foreign languages, use ethnic folkways, sing Gregorian "sadeness," and use baroque crescendos without making either their astronomy, their world clique, or their medieval manners into any kind of easy, self-defeating concept. They capture the jetset jetboy mood of the oddest '70s disco, and do it with a sense of silliness, songwriting chops, and (rarest of all) melodic hooks to match their rhythm ones.

In Sweden, from whence they come, they now outsell Roxette. And given how the band's Mark Twain clone Alexander Bard's pants fell down to reveal his purple G-string recently whilst the Army of Lovers performed its unreleased-in-the-U.S. international blaspheme-disco smash "Crucified" on Dutch TV, the rest of the planet is sure to follow. But that still doesn't mean the band should stand me up.

CHUCK EDDY

LEFT: ERIN SMITH

NEW MUSIC PREVIEW

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Looks like an indie but it's not. JIM GREER proves himself a fashionable follower of Dedicated, England's label extraordinaire.

England's most promising new label, Dedicated Records, is housed in offices that are easy to miss. Located on the second floor of an unassuming building on a London back street, this label is not counting on flashy corporate quarters to impress visitors and attract attention. Which is as it should be, because at Dedicated the focus is only on the music—symbolized by the piano that label president Doug D'Arcy installed in the office (just in case, you know, anyone feels inspired).

A small staff oversees the activities of the half-dozen or so bands on the current roster—not an unusual setup for an independent label, except that Dedicated is not an independent label. The company has a worldwide distribution deal with the mammoth BMG Corporation, a situation that affords it a fair degree of financial security in an increasingly shaky industry. These days in the U.K., the major labels seem content to leave the development of new talent to boutique operations such as Dedicated or Creation, having demonstrated that the only thing they really know how to make money from is box sets of music by dead or nearly dead artists.

"I'm not interested in running an independent label—I want to sell records," D'Arcy maintains. "My background is in major labels; I spent twenty years at Chrysalis. But the majors are no longer about music, they're about profit. What I wanted with Dedicated was a small label, the way Chrysalis was when we first started. One that treats bands as long-term projects and doesn't discard them if their first record fails." Dedicated's bands span a fairly broad musical spectrum: Spiritualized's tripped-out trance rock, Catwalk's sloppy, lyrically intricate art rock, This Picture's polished pop, Cranes' haunting, goth-tinged musings. The only thing they really have in common is Doug D'Arcy's determined commitment to their long-term development.

British label Dedicated's flagship band, Chapterhouse, *from left:* Ashley Bates, Simon Rowe, Russell Barrett, Stephen Patman, and Andrew Sherriff.

Reading-based sextet Chapterhouse owns the distinction of being, at least for now, the Dedicated flagship band. The band's debut album, *Whirlpool*, released last June, was the first full-length label effort to be released in the U.S. and fared quite well, reaching high into the college charts. *Whirlpool* presents an affecting mix of swirling guitar textures and breathy, minimally melodic vocals layered over a static groove

"We signed with Dedicated rather than with an indie because, out of all the people we met, they were the nicest people we'd come across," says singer-guitarist Stephen Patman. "And the best label we'd come across, whether they were a major or an indie."

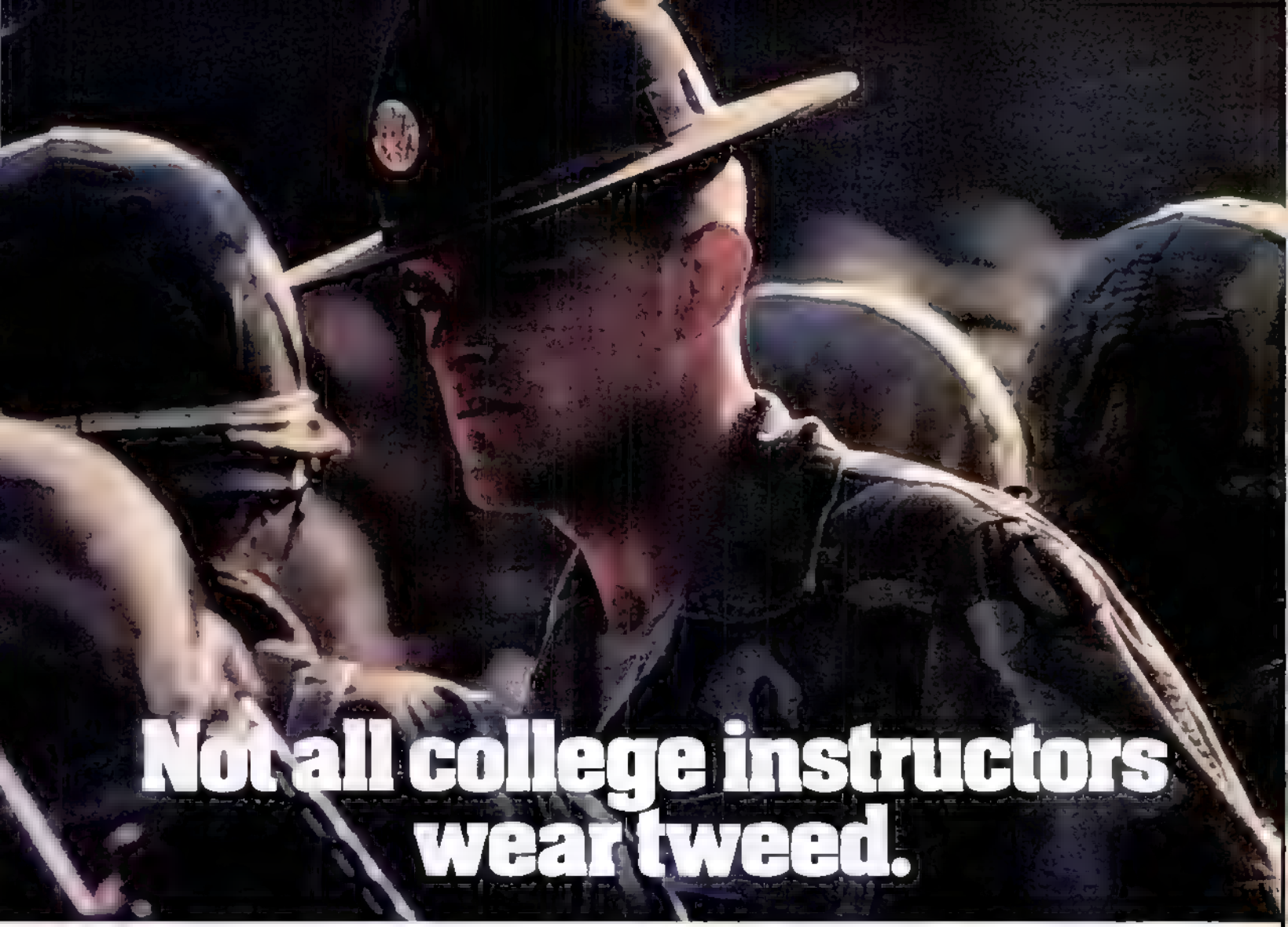
"They were just really different," adds singer-guitarist Andrew Sherriff. "We'd been around a lot of the independents and none of them really struck us as being genuine—and they weren't really giving us the offer that we wanted. And then the people that were giving us good offers, the majors, we'd go along to their buildings and it'd be like a tower block and you'd get herded around into this small room, and you're just talking to some A&R guy. Whereas with Dedicated, when we went there it was like the whole office. Doug came down to the pub with us and stuff like that; it was that kind of personal touch that we really wanted from a label. That made it different, cause you get that independent type of close-knit mentality, but you get the benefit of major backing and distribution."

"I think Doug takes more risks than most of the majors," says Catwalk's Chris Roberts, a journalist-turned-musician who also spent several months as A&R man for the then newly formed label "Also, there's only four people who work there, so if they like a band they're going to stay with that band. It's not like when the personnel changes and the band's left in the cold, which happens a lot with the majors."

"Dedicated don't really have much say in what we do musically," says Cranes singer Alison Shaw. "We're just completely left on advice—so we've got complete freedom in that respect, which is the main thing we wanted."

Of course, it's still early—Dedicated has plenty of time to turn into just another ogre of corporate greed. But for now, things remain peachy. "The great thing about Dedicated," says Chapterhouse's Sherriff, "is that they just started when we signed to them and we've more or less grown together."

BART EVERLY



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ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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THE CLUB

While her husband languished in prison, Winnie Mandela ran a mini-Mafia out of her Soweto home. Reporting from Johannesburg, JOHN CARLIN links it to 15 murders.

FOR A FEW MAGIC MOMENTS IT WAS LIKE THE old days, before the fall. There was Winnie Mandela, a Statue of Liberty come radiantly to life, blocking traffic in the middle of Johannesburg's busiest street and declaiming fiery-eyed against the injustices of the apartheid system.

The date was May 22, 1991—only nine days after she had been found guilty by a Johannesburg court of kidnapping four young black men. The time was 2:00 P.M. Clustered about her, like chicks around a hen, were a dozen other women protesters. Surrounding them in turn, in a ludicrously disproportionate show of force, were riot policemen in helmets, regular policemen restraining fang-baring German shepherds, and a fleet of yellow police vehicles—"the mellow yellows" as they call them in Soweto.

"You have five minutes to disperse!" warned the officer in charge, dressed in jungle camouflage, through a megaphone. Winnie acted as if the police were not there. Holding a statement with both hands, she declared, to the large crowd that had gathered to watch, "The government has reneged on its promise to release all political prisoners. The failure of the government to—"

"You have three minutes to disperse!"

"*The failure* of the government to keep its word has forced the prisoners to go on hunger strike."

The policeman kept his eye fixed

WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

ИЗВЕСТИЯ

on his watch, Winnie's on the statement she was reading. "We demand—"

"You have thirty seconds left to disperse."

"We demand their immediate release!"

Bangs, thunder flashes, a cloud of tear gas. In the bat of an eyelid the street was clear. But the police, ignoring the other protesters, made a beeline for Winnie. It took five of them to drag her into a police car.

But not before, huffing and puffing, a picture of outraged dignity, she had time to turn to the press to denounce the "terrorist" police and their attacks on "innocent women." "And this," she continued, "while the hunger-striking prisoners are urinating blood. No, this is not going to deter me. The struggle goes on!" And she was bundled into the car and driven off.

It was the second time in the day Winnie had been arrested at the very same intersection. In fact, minutes earlier she had made a brief appearance at the Johannesburg Magistrates' Court, charged with obstructing traffic. Upon her release she briskly strode off to obstruct traffic again.

Magnificent stuff, pure "Mother of the Nation," the title she bore at home and abroad from the day in 1964 when her husband was sentenced to life in prison until the events that took place at her home on the last days of December 1988 came to light. As reported, sensationally, in the local press in January and February 1989, four young black men were kidnapped by Winnie's bodyguards—the Mandela United Football Club, as they called themselves—from the Methodist mission house in Soweto where they were staying and then savagely assaulted at Winnie's home. One of the four—14-year-old Stompie Moeketsi—died as a consequence of the beatings. In May 1990, Winnie's chief bodyguard, Football Club "coach" Jerry Richardson, was found guilty of the murder of Stompie, a legendary child activist who had led hundreds of youths in battle against the police in the colors of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC).

The real reason Stompie was kidnapped and killed has never been satisfactorily explained, either inside or outside the courtroom. Winnie herself has never publicly accused Stompie of having been a "sellout," or police informer, although state witnesses whose testimony was not accepted in court have claimed that she did call Stompie precisely that to his face as she, allegedly, beat him.

WINNIE MANDELA'S criminal guilt is not disputed by informed, high-level members of the African National Congress. There are those, however, who feel there is a strong case to be made in extenuation. They point, for example, to the fact that it was as a starry-eyed—if spunky—social worker, freshly arrived in the big city of Johannesburg from her rural Transkei home, that she met Nelson Mandela, already a legend in his own lifetime and 16 years her senior. He fell for her—even though he was married at the time. And she, naturally, fell for him. Instantly, bewilderingly, Winnie Mandela found herself plunged into a world of intrigue, clandestinity, and high politics for which she was woefully unprepared. They married in 1958 but, even before Nelson Mandela's imprisonment in 1962, never spent more than four months at a time together, as he was forced to spend his life underground.

She was to describe herself several years later as "the most unmarried married woman." But that was hardly her only sorrow. For the first 13 years of her husband's imprisonment she was a "banned" person, which meant she could not legally engage in anything dimly resembling political work; in May 1969 she was detained for 491 days; in 1976 she was detained again, for four months; in 1977 she was "banished" for eight years to the remote rural town of Brandfort, a bastion of hostile white Afrikanerdom. Always, wherever she has been, she has been subject to continual police harassment.

By the time she got around to setting up the Football Club in 1986, she had accumulated a good measure of resentment against the white man in particular and the world in general, a feeling reinforced by her sense of herself as eternal first-lady-in-waiting, as a woman, impoverished and oppressed, naturally meriting power, affluence, and high office. Such sentiments were, of course, fueled by those millions within and beyond South Africa who saw her as the tragic, dignified wife of the man chosen to be the redeemer and king of the disenfranchised black majority.

Those high-flying visions and aspirations were cruelly undercut, however, by the daily reminders of her powerlessness in the face of apartheid's unsmiling police state. At an immediate level, then, the club served the useful purpose of allowing her to move through the streets with less fear—even the Soweto police learned to treat "Winnie's boys" with a certain trepidation. But more important, they gave her a palpable sense of power. They provided the queen with both court and army. To be accompanied wherever she went by a retinue smartly turned out in distinctive Mandela United track suits both bolstered her badly bruised but mighty self-esteem and provided her with a squad of foot soldiers ready to mete out instant justice to anyone who dared challenge her authority.

Sadly, pathetically in a sense, the objects of the club's sinister attentions were always their hapless fellow blacks and not, as Winnie would have ideally wanted, the guardians of the white state. Friends in Soweto sought to restrain her, as did leaders of "the movement." But she was too far gone in her hate and delusion—as well as far, far too obstinate—to listen to anybody. So possessed was she of her queenly infallibility, a trait evidently rooted long before she met Nelson Mandela, that one old friend was recently moved to remark, "There is a Hindu saying, 'If five people tell you something, it is like God talking to you.' She won't even listen to God."

Winnie and Nelson Mandela outside the White House after meeting with President Bush in June 1990.

ON MAY 13, 1991, after 44 days in court, Justice Michael Stegmann pronounced Winnie guilty "beyond reasonable doubt" of conspiracy to kidnap and of having acted as an accessory to assault. Justice Stegmann described Winnie as a "calm, composed, deliberate and unblushing liar" who was not above "intrigue or dissimulation." Adding, for good measure, that Winnie's testimony had been "brazenly untruthful," the judge said Winnie had authorized both the kidnapping and the beatings, even if she herself had not physically taken part. "To imagine that all this happened without Winnie as a moving spirit is like imagining *Hamlet* without the prince." The next day the judge delivered his sentence: six years in jail. Im-

WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

mediately, however, she stated her intention to appeal and walked out on bail.

A big question mark hangs over whether she will ever spend time behind bars. The appeal itself will not be heard for over a year. Be that as it may, Winnie has already been judged by her immediate community, by the people of Soweto. Indeed, she was found guilty long ago. The African National Congress itself—an organization not accustomed to airing its dirty laundry in public—indicated to the press that the controversy surrounding Winnie and her Football Club goes much deeper than anything to have emerged during what has become known as "the Stompie affair." On February 16, 1989, the day after Stompie's body was positively identified by the police, the most senior political and labor union leaders loyal to the then banned ANC inside South Africa called a news conference. In funereal tones, Murphy Morobe, acting publicity secretary of the United Democratic Front, read a statement on behalf of the Mass Democratic Movement. He began:

> We have now reached the state where we have no option but to speak publicly on what is a very sensitive and painful matter. In recent years Winnie's actions have increasingly led her into conflict with various sections of the oppressed people and with the Mass Democratic Movement as a whole. The recent conflict in the community has centered largely around the conduct of her so-called Football Club, which has been widely condemned by the community. In particular, we are outraged by the reign of terror that the team has been associated with.

Behind closed doors, in the houses of ANC supporters, they rail against Winnie Mandela. "Mugger of the Nation," a favorite quip, makes them laugh until they cry. But officially, other than this single public censure of Winnie's actions, the ANC has said nothing. It is only unofficially, in their private capacities, that a few brave souls have dared to speak to reporters.

EROTHODI IKANENG, A FOUNDING member of the Football Club, is one of these. Now 24 years old, Ikaneng recalled how one day late in 1986 Winnie gathered at her home two rival groups of the ANC Soweto Youth Congress and told them that they should stop fighting each other, that they should become comrades. About 20 youths were present at the meeting. A friend of Ikaneng's suggested that, as a means of reconciliation, a soccer club be formed. Winnie agreed to sponsor the club and pay for its equipment, and Ikaneng and some of the other boys moved into her small Soweto home.

At the time the soccer club was formed, South Africa's black townships, and Soweto in particular, were in turmoil. The government imposed a national state of emergency in response to seething unrest among the black population, many of whom—the youth especially—were convinced that they were on the brink of storming the ramparts of apartheid. But the revolutionary dream soon evaporated. Hundreds died in confrontations with the security forces, and through the special powers invested in the police by the state of emergency, virtually the entire leadership of the United Democratic Front, and many thousands with them, were jailed without charge. It was against this background of disillusionment and directionlessness in black politics that, at the end of 1986, the Mandela United Football Club was formed.

Initially a few soccer games were played, but the club's impact was felt more in criminal endeavor than in sport. By piecing together evidence already before the courts, as well as allegations made by Ikaneng and other witnesses who provided eyewitness accounts, a total of 15 murders, and one "disappearance," can be linked directly to the club. Twelve of the murders were committed by three former club associates who are now on death row in Pretoria. Ikaneng recollected how it all began:

"On the twenty-seventh of January 1987, all the members of the Football Club who were staying at Winnie's house were arrested in connection with a shooting which later became known as 'the Seheri case.' We were taken to the police station and interrogated about the killings which had been committed by Seheri, a trained guerrilla who had been staying at Winnie's."

Oupa Seheri, one of the club members currently on death row, was charged in February 1988 with a double murder in a Soweto bar. Two other club members, Sitempiso Buthelezi and Charles Zwane, were charged as accessories to the killings. Both frequently stayed at Winnie's home, and Buthelezi was the boyfriend of Winnie's daughter Zindzi. In court, both Winnie's home and car were linked to the two killings: "Seheri regarded this address as a safe place for leaving weapons. Seheri met Buthelezi and Zwane in Zindzi's bedroom. There he exchanged an AK-47 automatic rifle for a Scorpion pistol, leaving the AK-47 with them. Seheri got into a yellow Chevrolet with two other men from Winnie Mandela's home. Buthelezi followed in a maroon Audi car owned by Winnie Mandela. He was accompanied by Zwane and four other young men from Winnie Mandela's home. Later, after the shootings, Buthelezi and Zwane saw to the safe custody of the pistol in Zindzi's room."

Winnie was spared a court appearance after the defense and prosecution reached agreement on writing the admissions regarding Winnie's home and car into the court record. Seheri was convicted and sentenced to death. Buthelezi and Zwane were found guilty but received only 18 months and a suspended sentence respectively. Zwane, whom the judge in question might now regret having released, resumed his place at the club. He encountered a Mafia-style operation—this was still early 1988—to which he was temperamentally well-suited.

But Nelson Mandela dotes on his wife. She stood by him, as he sees it, during his long imprisonment, and she can do no wrong. He has suspended his reason and, blinded by love, has ignored the howls of protest from within his own movement.

Ikaneng picked up the story: "People from all over Soweto would come to the gates of Winnie's house and report things to them—quarrels between husbands and wives, thefts, particularly car thefts, and sometimes accusations that people were working for the police. Those things would be reported to a boy at the gate who would write them in a book. The book would be shown to Winnie, who would decide if certain people involved in the complaints should be brought to the home."

Ikaneng said he would go with the other boys to fetch suspected offenders, some of whom they brought to Winnie's by force. "At the house there was a kind of court in the yard. Winnie would come out of the house to listen to the case with members of the disciplinary committee. Winnie might leave before the end of a trial and leave the decision up to the committee, but they would always tell her what they had decided. The punishment was normally lashes, but for more serious crimes like car theft, it was lashes, kicks, and punches. We would all take part. I lost count how many beatings there were."

The disciplinary committee, a sort of haphazard paramilitary tribunal also dispensed internal justice, applied with vigor if the Football Club members failed to abide by the rigorous boarding-school-type code of conduct Winnie enforced at her home. Ikaneng and two friends, Joseph and Tholi, repeatedly failed to play by the rules, which meant they exposed themselves to any number of accusations, including the most dreaded, which was to be called a sellout. It was this charge that Sizwe Sithole, the head of the disciplinary committee and, after Buthelezi had gone to jail, Zindzi Mandela's boyfriend, leveled against Ikaneng and his two friends in 1988. One

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MTV runs the world, and Tom Freston runs MTV. LISA ROBINSON interviews him.

TOM FRESTON, CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF MTV Networks is arguably the most powerful man in the music industry. But more interesting, perhaps, is that he is also keenly in touch with, and excited about, the music on the channel.

After getting his B.A. from St. Michael's College and an M.B.A. at New York University in the 1960s, Freston worked for an ad agency, then took off for India to open an import clothing business. Starting out in the MTV baby days as head of marketing, Freston quickly rose within the company; by 1986, after MTV was bought by Viacom, he was made president of MTV's entertainment division and, by 1989, chairman and CEO.

Ten years after its inception, MTV is carried in 54.5 million U.S. homes, 200 million worldwide, has about 8,000 video clips in its library, and was recently referred to by the *Los Angeles Times* as "the channel that ate the world."

According to Chrysalis Records president John Sykes, who started at MTV with Freston back in 1981 when the channel had only two million viewers and 180 video clips ("and about thirty of them were Rod Stewart's," quips Freston), "Tom's the kid in school who was a blast to fool around with, but he always knew when to put on a straight face and take care of business." Jeff Ayeroff, who coheads Virgin Records, says, "He understands how to schmooze people, but he doesn't bullshit you. It's kind of novel that someone like this would run a company; he's a straight shooter, and that's rare in an industry where it would be real easy to be an asshole." Says former MTV exec Bob Friedman, who now runs the Playboy Channel, "MTV is not normal TV, and Tom is the perfect not-normal executive."

In his spacious office, Freston sits on a couch in front of a round table, his tie loosened, eyes animated. TV monitors air VH-1 and MTV simultaneously, but throughout our several talks, he periodically jumps up to play a tape of a new band he's heard and likes. Freston talks music as much as numbers, and is both thoughtful and passionate about the culture MTV covers, and has inevitably influenced.

SPIN: How do you answer people who say that MTV has helped to kill music?

Tom Freston: They've got it wrong. One, it's questionable as to whether music is dead. Maybe it's just sleeping. But two, I think the reverse is true: MTV made music more interesting and more relevant to a larger number of people. MTV's been really helpful to a lot of new bands: Jane's Addiction, Black Crowes, R.E.M., to name a few, as well as all the rap artists. If anything, video has shown these groups to be more artistically inclined than many had thought; it enhanced their music, it helped their image.

SPIN: What about criticism that you jam lots of familiar pop and hair-band junk and it's impossible for newer, more musically valid bands to get a break?

Freston: We try and be fair. I understand we're in a sensitive position. I understand that people spend a lot of money, and a lot of time making a lot of hopes and dreams. This is very important to them and they probably perceive that, to us, this is just another backhand decision that we make while we're sitting around talking about how great we are.

If we programmed to our personal taste, we'd be

out of business. There's a lot of music out here that deserves an ear, and there are only 24 hours a day. We can't break every band in the country, but we do play a lot more new music than radio does. People at MTV would program a lot hipper if they had their way. We tried it with VH-1 last year for nine months; we went from Julia Fordham into k.d. lang and a lot of hip stuff for the older audience, and ratings collapsed by two-thirds. At MTV, we can't be purely left of center and survive economically. We play a certain amount of mass-appeal hits, but we do have a commitment to the alternative. We may not be as extreme as a college radio station, but I don't think there's a commercial radio station in the U.S. that's as eclectic as MTV, where you can see Public Enemy, Paul Simon, Slaughter, the Cure, Sonic Youth, and Chris Isaak all on one station. We're not in the business of being a cult thing. We're a business and want to appeal to a lot of people.

SPIN: I wonder what you think about a lot of the stuff that gets on your channel.

Freston: Oh, I'm way beyond that—you know, my personal taste. Any good programmer anywhere you've got to use your personal taste to some extent, but if you're a good programmer, you've got a gut that says, Hey, this isn't my personal taste but, man, I know this is a hit.

SPIN: Still, you have a lot to answer for: Milli Vanilli, M.C. Hammer, Vanilla Ice.

Freston: As far as Milli Vanilli is concerned—look, Phil Spector used to record songs with people who ultimately didn't go on tour and sing them. Milli Vanilli were sort of a novelty act, sort of a cartoon act. I love when they said they were going to be bigger than Bob Dylan. I love their choice—they'd be more important than *Bob Dylan*. As for M.C. Hammer and Vanilla Ice, we tried for the longest time not to play Vanilla Ice, and when we did, the phones just lit up like crazy. M.C. Hammer—I think one out of every three households in the country bought that record. How can we afford to not play something that popular?

SPIN: How about your banning of Madonna's "Justify My Love" video?

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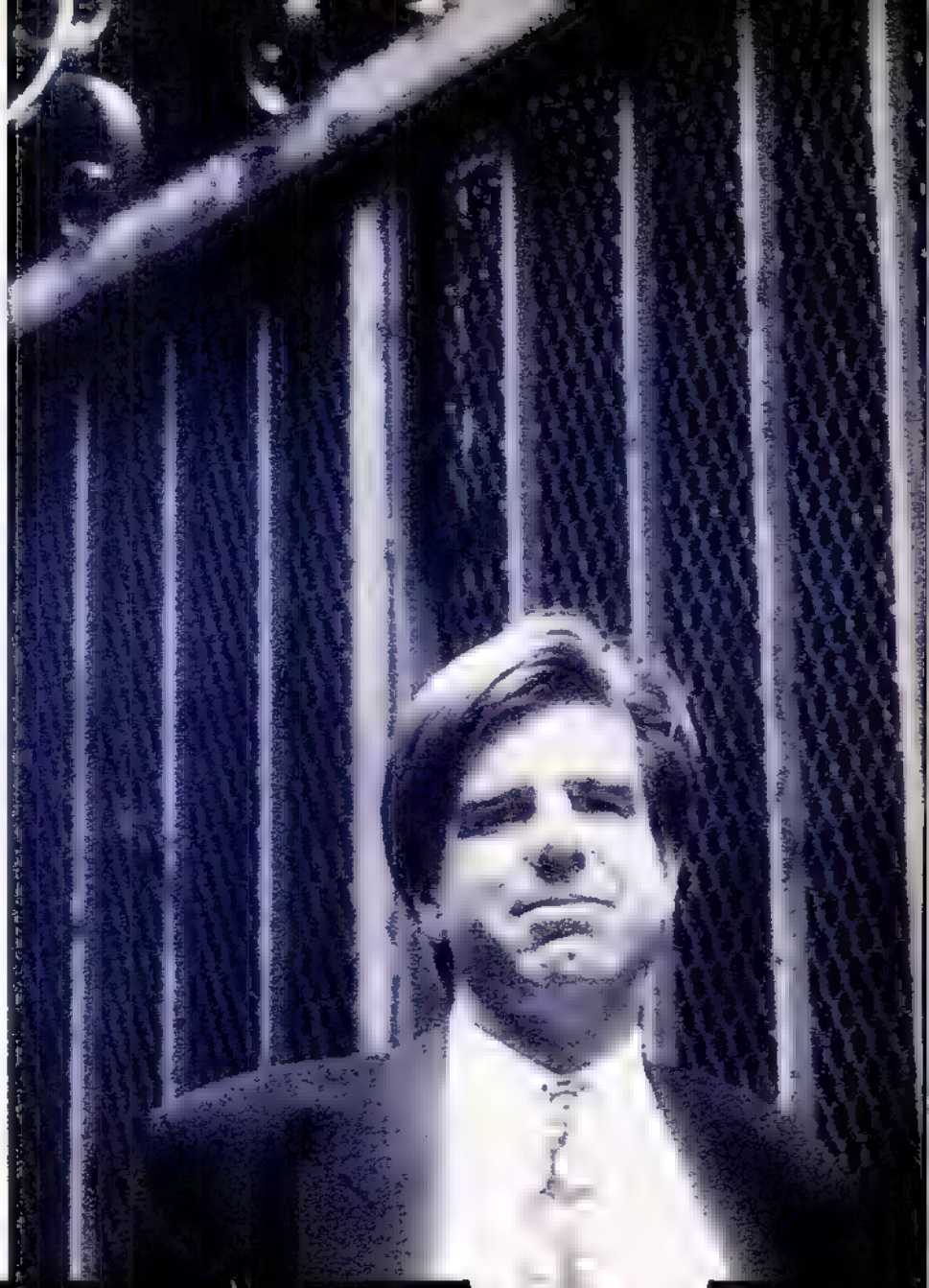
NICK VACCARRO



MTV

Material on this page is subject to

ANTIHERO ON THE EVE OF THE RELEASE OF OLIVER STONE'S CONTROVERSIAL NEW FILM, *JFK*, MICHAEL PAKENHAM INTERVIEWS HIM ABOUT DEATH, THE MOVIES, AND ROCK'N'ROLL. He was a Roman Catholic and none had ever reached the White House. At 43, he was young enough to scare old men—the powerful. He faced Richard Nixon, smart, tough, older, floating high on the sweet, easy years of Eisenhower. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected by one of the narrowest margins in U.S. political history. Then everything changed. He stepped

PORTRAIT BY MICHAEL TIGHE

Materiał chroniony prawem autorskim

into the presidency the way a sharp breeze can freshen a mid-August day in Georgia. America's air seemed cleaner, clearer. He was funny. He bubbled with energy and decency. There was a joy in him that got footsore men and women walking just about two-and-a-half inches above the pavement. A nail-tough politician, he insisted that public service is the noblest of all lives. He got angry with people who abandoned hope. Every one of you, he taunted America and peoples beyond, *every one of you* can make this world a finer, fairer, more beautiful place—and have a delicious time doing it. And they came to believe him, with a pent-up passion. This was a springtime for civilization.

Then, at 30 minutes after high noon on November 22, 1963, at a spot called Dealey Plaza, John Kennedy was shot dead while he made love to a crowd from an open car.

He was mourned as very few have been. All over earth, in packed public squares and into very lonely pillows, tears flowed and would not stop. More streets, schools, and sons were named for him than probably anybody ever save the Christian holy family.

To solve John Kennedy's murder, President Lyndon Johnson appointed a commission of the nation's most senior public figures, under the chairmanship of Chief Justice Earl Warren, the man who, more than any other, had made modern American law liberal.

After ten months of taking and studying evidence, the commission concluded that the sole, lone assassin was Lee Harvey Oswald, a complicated, pathetic character who, while in custody and still denying he killed Kennedy, had been shot dead, two days after the assassination, in full public view, by a sleazy nightclub operator named Jack Ruby, who himself died soon after in prison.

For a wounded, bereft nation, the Oswald solution was comfortable. Life went on. The Johnson presidency soared, until, long later, it slipped and ultimately drowned in the swamps of Vietnam.

Gradually, the doubts about Kennedy's death grew. The earliest were dismissed as the whinings of political opportunists or the yowlings of paranoids. But slowly, the misgivings became more elaborate, better substantiated. Hundreds of serious people, a major committee investigation by the U.S. Congress, prosecutors, scholars, "buffs"—came to reject the Warren Commission's conclusion. A controversial, volatile district attorney in New Orleans, Jim Garrison, put together a prosecution on a theory of conspiracy involving dozens of people, with deep roots in government and power. There was one trial, of a man named Clay Shaw, who was swiftly acquitted.

That is the context of the release of *JFK*, a film written and directed by Oliver Stone. At press time, the movie was already a bitter controversy, although nobody but Stone and a handful of aides knew what was in it. Previously, Stone won an Academy Award for writing the screenplay for *Midnight Express* and two more Oscars for directing *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*.

SPIN Executive Editor Michael Pakenham, who covered Kennedy as a Washington correspondent, went to Santa Monica, California, to talk with Stone. They met in a small, undecorated conference room amid a sprawl of unmarked offices that were the editing facilities for *JFK*.

Kevin Costner as conspiracy theorist Jim Garrison, and Sissy Spacek, playing his wife.

SPIN: Where were you when Kennedy was shot?

Oliver Stone: I was in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, at the Hill School. I was a senior, and to me that whole day was like the movie *Fail-Safe*. We'll always remember the humdrum. They dropped the bomb and then they cut to all these shots of New York City and all the people just sort of walking around feeding pigeons. Just doing the normal mundane things. And then the world stops. I was sitting in a chair, reading a book between classes. A kid comes in. It's somewhat like in the movie when [Kevin] Costner hears it. The kid comes in and he's in the doorway and he says, "The President's been shot. Dallas. Five, ten minutes ago." "Why? What happened? Is he dead?" "No. He's not dead. He was hit in the head but it's serious, you know." It was something like that. We were all shocked. And then when I was in Texas I heard the opposite stories down South. That kids in schools, in classrooms—this was told to me—why, one woman said she was the only one in the classroom that was disgusted and everybody else in her class in Texas cheered when he died.

SPIN: You're still editing *JFK*. What will it contain?

Stone: We're coming out on December 20. It will be a long film. It's the Oswald story. It's the Garrison story. It's the Washington, D.C., military-industrial-complex story. It's got the beginnings of the Vietnam War. It's going to be entwined with all these stories paralleling each other.

SPIN: The majority of SPIN's readers weren't born when Kennedy was killed. Why should a history movie about his death be more important than, say, his brother's assassination, or Malcolm X's—or President McKinley's, for that matter?

Stone: Well, I think Jack Kennedy was the first in a line of progressive leaders that were killed in the 1960s. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy followed and there is a pattern there. These people were not killed by lone nuts. One has to trace the underlying pattern. And if one does, one begins to understand the '60s was the seminal decade for the '90s, what's going on now. If our leaders hadn't been killed we would be in a different world now. For example, I don't believe we would have been in Vietnam. Jack Kennedy would never have sent combat troops to 'Nam. And Vietnam led to Nixon. It led to repression and fear. It led to a breakdown of law and order in this country. It led to economic recession, poverty. It led to the eruptions of the '70s. It led to the fear that gave us Reagan in the '80s. It all ties back from the '90s to the '60s. You have to realize that Dan Quayle, who is my age, is now coming into power. And he will be a leader. He may very well be our next President. And his thinking was shaped in the '60s. So the '60s is not McKinley's era. It is not a pure history. It is very real. It is the basis for our thinking in the '90s.

SPIN: What's a young person with considerable ignorance to the Kennedy story going to take from the film *JFK*?

Stone: A search for the truth. The spirit of search for the truth. We can't bring Kennedy back. I'm not going to say that Kennedy was totally the Camelot warrior pictured. He was a tough bastard in politics, and he fought dirty. He had a side life, a sordid side life. Not sordid, but romantic, romantic affairs and liaisons. He had Mafia connections through his father. And he was a backdoor fighter. He was targeting voting districts for dollars, for defense dollars, just like any other President does. He was accused of stealing the election in West Virginia and in Illinois. You know, you can't idealize him and simplify him. You've got to look through the surfaces of the official myth that he was killed by one lone nut in Dallas as given to us by the Warren Commission. What we've learned, through my era, is that we can't trust the government. We did trust the government in the 1950s. When Eisenhower spoke to us, we trusted him. We trusted his speeches and what he had to say. Right up until 1963, I think, that was the day that we started to switch off.

Garrison believes that the assassination of JFK was a governmental coup.

SPIN: So what is an engaged young American who's almost totally ignorant of the facts going to take from this film?

Stone: To search for the truth. To think for himself. And not to trust the official body of knowledge that's passed on in school. Right now in the primary texts in school, they mention the Kennedy assassination in two paragraphs, with Earl Warren, Jack Kennedy, Jackie, Lee Oswald, and Lyndon Johnson. That's

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SPIN 01

all they get. It's easy to believe it was just a tragic accident like a man being hit in a car accident or a lightning bolt. This is not true. Politics is power. There was a coup d'état. This happened in this country. And they have to know why. They have to understand what the American government really is. What the political process really is. What the establishment really is. I hope this movie does that. I hope it explains some of it. It can't explain all of it, but we can start.

SPIN: Your films often seem to be about you. How is *JFK* about you, and what did President Kennedy mean to you as a personal experience?

Stone: To me, he was the godfather of my generation. He was the most stirring figure. We were coming of age. We were all between fourteen and twenty, I guess, or twelve and twenty. We were the baby boom generation and he was of us, he was young. After ten years of Eisenhower and Truman—the old men. Everybody in government seemed to be old—mustaches and white hair. So Jack Kennedy with his beautiful wife was the New Man. A symbol of freedom. He didn't wear a hat, his hair was blowing in the wind. He had beautiful hair. Great smile. Great Irish delivery. Great rhetoric. Great speaker.

SPIN: There was, after the assassination, a sense of an apocalyptic fall from grace. If nothing else, a lot of evil followed—the other assassinations and then Vietnam and then Watergate. Do you see this sequence of essentially evil acts and facts in the U.S. as part of a fabric growing from the assassination?

Stone: The most sinister thing that happened was that on the day of the funeral, [President Lyndon] Johnson met with [U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam Henry Cabot] Lodge. While this was going on, he went inside and had a meeting with the generals and with Lodge, who had just come back from Vietnam, and they talked about the policy. And he left no doubt whatsoever that he was not going to take one man out of there. He said, I'm not going to let Vietnam go the way of China, which was escalating war talk. Kennedy never used that kind of talk. Suddenly we are involved in covert ops, which means basically CIA's back at their old ball game, sending men into North Vietnam and setting the stage for the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964—which was this wholly staged evil incident. A lie was told to the American public saying that that ship was attacked by North Vietnamese. It was not. We know that now.

Then that got the vote of Congress. And you know the rest; I mean, that set up the whole war. I think that there was a conspiracy to war in Southeast Asia from 1961 on. And I think that they were very pissed when Kennedy did not let them go into Laos on April 17, 1961. There's a lot of money involved here. Ultimately five thousand helicopters were made for Vietnam, by Bell Helicopter, which was near bankruptcy. There was the whole issue of the TFX fighter contract, which was a scandal apparently. The moment Johnson came into office, the investigation was stalled.

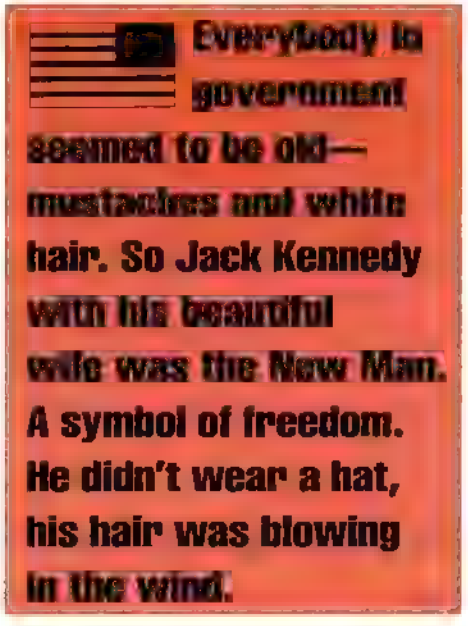
SPIN: Your suggestion is that these people were interested in developing war essentially for profit. Is is that simple or are the motivations really deeper or more complex than that?

Stone: Yeah, it's not a bunch of bankers saying, "Well, we're going to pick a war here." It doesn't work quite that way, but they're intertwined. Bankers are intertwined with military men and have been for generations.

SPIN: What do you estimate the chances are that the Kennedy assassination puzzle will ever be definitively and incontrovertibly solved? Or do you think it has been?

Stone: Well, I think a lot of the facts were pretty solid back when they first happened, in that nobody ever really put it together into one crossword puzzle. We had facts from the left and from the right. But I've never seen it all come together, really, in one format. I've tried in the movie to put together as many of the theories and facts that I could. I don't know it will be solved as to who and how. I think we can ask why and I think we can come up with some pretty good answers. Kennedy was really moving to end the cold war and sign a nuclear treaty with the Soviets; he would not have gone to war in Southeast Asia. He was starting a backdoor negotiation with Castro. I just basically go to see if I can figure out why [Kennedy was assassinated]. I think that's as far as we're going to get at this stage. Unless, *unless*, certain people come forth and talk that are still alive, if they're alive.

"You have a reformer who is killed by the establishment because he seeks change. And then you have an ordinary citizen, as Jim Garrison was."


Everybody in government seemed to be old—mustaches and white hair. So Jack Kennedy with his beautiful wife was the New Man. A symbol of freedom. He didn't wear a hat, his hair was blowing in the wind.

SPIN: They dug up Zachary Taylor this year, to settle forever a chemical hypothesis about the cause of his death—in 1850. He was not one of our major Presidents. Why is there still so much conflict over the evidence in finding out how and why John Kennedy died?

Stone: Because if the government killed him, you'd want to know why. You'd want to know it's your own government, wouldn't you? I mean this is a major thing. It's not just like a bunch of gangsters got together, Mafia guys, and killed him, or Castro killed him, or Khrushchev killed him. If in fact it was our government or part of our government or establishment, then it becomes significant.

SPIN: You speak often of film as history and as affecting the understanding of history. If you could have your choice, what effect would this film have on the conventional perceptions of history in a broader sense?

Stone: Well, it would show the first coup d'état in America, that's for sure. I think that in Europe they got this right away. I think the foreign press was much more alert to the possibilities of the change and transference of political power in this country than was the American press.

What's historically important about a coup d'état? It shows the nature of political power. It shows the people of the world the nature of the American government, the nature of the establishment, what it stands for, what it's fighting to protect. Why it would kill a man who's President, why it would feel threatened by a young President, to what degree did he threaten. What would he have taken from them?

SPIN: Isn't there a danger in seeing John Kennedy in romantic retrospect, as a sort of messiah figure in an America that was in need of a messiah? A kind of a secular Jesus?

Stone: I don't see him that way at all. Like I said earlier, I saw him as a savvy political animal. Fighting dirty, unheroic in many aspects. Who's fighting with his brother Robert. His early moves against Castro are not particularly those of a pragmatic man that wants to get rid of an enemy. I mean he's not this Sir Galahad figure at all. I see him as the son of Joe Kennedy, who was a Mafia-oriented thief from the 1920s who wanted to get his son elected. But I do see Kennedy as changing in office and maturing—a bit like Gorbachev—and growing into more of a statesman than when he started and wanting to change things. And I

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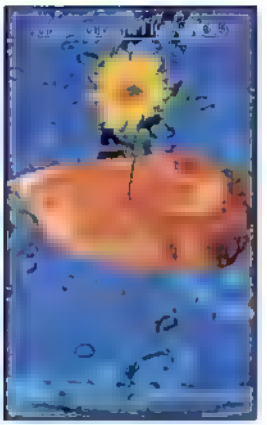


SIDE A

KING MISSILE
"Pickaxe"

M.C. LYTE
"When In Love"

NEIGHBORHOODS
"Bitter Moon"

PALE DIVINE
"Something About Me"

JULIAN LENNON
"Get A Life"

FUTURE SOUND
"What's A Brother To Do ?"

DIE WARZAU
"Funkopolis"

THE FAT LADY SINGS
"Arc:light"

SIGN
"13th Disciple"

24-7 SPYZ
"Stunt Man"

LIEUTENANT STITCHIE
"Night And Day"

PRIMUS
"American Life"

SIDE B

SIMPLY RED
"Something Got Me Started"

WENDY'S
"Pulling Off My Fingers"

PSYCHEFUNKAPUS
"Evol Ving"

JIMMY Z (with Dr. Love)
"Funky Flute"

HEATHER MULLEN
"Drinking The Rain Water"

NEIGHBORHOODS
"Prettiest Girl"

EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL
"Old Friends"

FAMILY STAND
"New World Order"

YOUNG & MAULEIR
Glory"

SNAPDRAGONS
"The Turning Of The Centuries"

HARD CORPS
"Hard Corps"

Topspin

continued from page 10

notably Dr. Peter Duesberg, the Berkeley-based molecular biologist who is one of the world's leading experts on retroviruses (HIV is one), say the HIV hypothesis simply doesn't add up. To the dissenters it is as if the scientific community has declared that two plus two equals five and closed the case: The dissenters want a recount. These are not people who think the earth is flat. They are concerned that for AIDS, and perhaps more accurately because of the hysteria surrounding it, conventional scientific principles have been ignored or bent to fit a pretty much preordained hypothesis. The fact that hundreds of thousands of lives—not just Magic Johnson's—hang in the balance of this debate makes its circumvention potentially homicidal. If HIV is not the sole or major culprit of AIDS, then tens of thousands of lives will have been sacrificed to a reluctance to admit the uncertainty. Even worse is the possibility that the drug and testing industries' agendas, tied to HIV, have stifled the debate—the suspicion of that alone should cause someone in Congress to open it up. (I mean, if the Senate can have hearings about rock lyrics, can't they have one about HIV?)

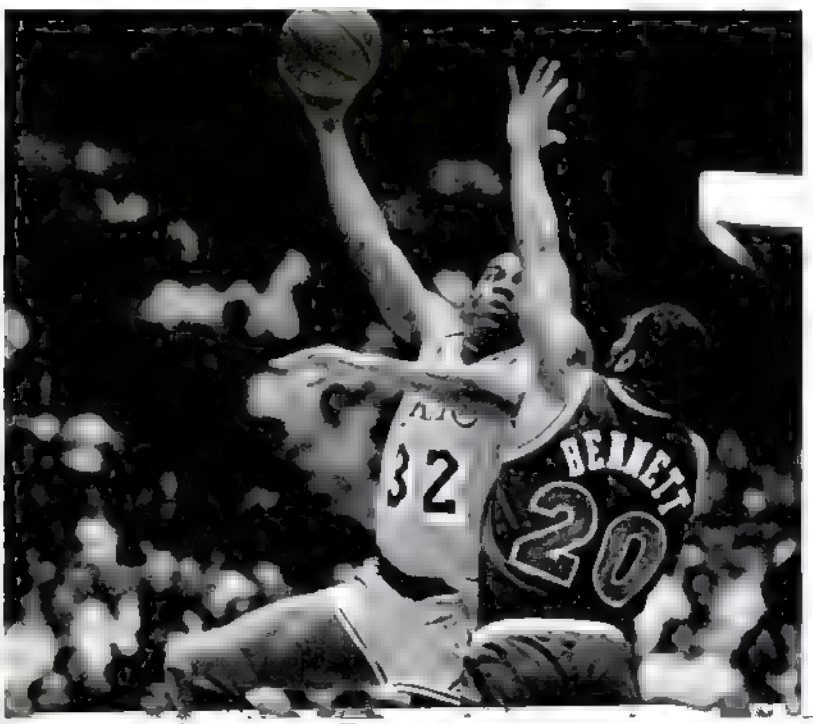
Duesberg points out that chief among the weaknesses in the HIV theory is the fact that the official definition of an AIDS case is one of the diseases listed as resulting from immune deficiency, plus the presence of HIV—a self-fulfilling prophecy. A person with the exact same diseases, but not exhibiting HIV infection, is said to not have AIDS—and is treated for the diseases they have. The AIDS patient is treated more often than not with AZT. "AIDS by prescription" Duesberg calls it, adding he thinks Magic Johnson will be dead within two years if he goes on the medication.

In the virtually medieval-simplistic equation of AIDS treatment, HIV equals AZT, *and AZT does demonstrably more damage than HIV has ever been proven to.* There are no long-term survivors on AZT—the drug's maker has reluctantly admitted that to SPIN in the past—yet there are many long-term AIDS survivors who don't take the drug, who, by definition, don't treat HIV, and there are hundreds of thousands of people living healthily with HIV infection untreated by AZT. A ninth-grade science class could work out for themselves that there are aspects about HIV which suggest caution before rushing to treatment.

In his efforts to increase awareness, Johnson might unwittingly do more to spread ignorance about the disease, by becoming the poster child for the wrong and misunderstood information.

The criticism leveled at essays like this is that the writer is being irresponsible and, for whatever callous motive, singing a siren's song by seducing people away from the security of omniscient medical determinations. This criticism works on two presumptions: that the medical establishment is infallible, completely moral and beyond reproach or even questioning, and that the essayist, for some reason, wants to hurt people. Don't believe either.

I don't pretend to have the answers, but I know I have the questions, and as a journalist it's my role to insist they be addressed, because, especially in this case, the doubts they raise may be lifesaving.



A Magic moment on the court

WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Peter Duesberg says that HIV is meaningless to the development of AIDS, that it is a sign of the body having successfully defeated the invading virus, indicated by the existence of the HIV antibodies (which is what the test actually detects when confirming someone positive). "It's already *over*," he says in his slightly clipped German accent. "What you are seeing [in the detected antibodies] is the soldiers carrying the dead from the battlefield." Duesberg also believes the virus is a "marker" for risk behavior, and says that there are a myriad of explanations for its presence in people who are not in risk groups (ranging from inheritance to blood transfusions), but in all cases, to his mind, HIV is not what's causing the fatal trouble, that whatever else is traveling with HIV *is*: the disease that eventually fells the victim, whether it's pneumonia, dementia, TB or whatever. He points out that AIDS itself is not a disease but a collection of severe ones that have been around for hundreds of years. People tend to forget that, and so the distinction between HIV and AIDS blurs further, and people think one really does absolutely beget the other, and, effectively, treat them both as the same. In doing so they possibly kill themselves.

I don't know if Peter Duesberg is right. I've known him for four years and he has never entirely convinced me, because of my natural skepticism, but I have never found fault with his logic. It *is* logical. The prevailing theory, that AIDS develops eventually from HIV, is actually less logical when you break it down.

Duesberg could be completely wrong—my doctor, who is head of Lenox Hill Hospital in New York and wrote one of the original AIDS papers, thinks he is "full of shit." Then again, my doctor could be wrong. I asked Duesberg how he explained the emergence of the syndrome called AIDS if, as he says, it isn't a new and different affliction. He explained that at the outbreak of what came to be called AIDS, there were all of a sudden higher than usual incidences of diseases such as Kaposi's sarcoma and pneumonia, not normally found in men between 25 to 40. He also said the only significantly new health hazard in the last 20 years has been excessive drug abuse, and that that is what has decimated the health of the AIDS-afflicted population, rendering them susceptible to the other, destructive diseases. Furthermore, he points out there are plenty of cases of homosexuals and IV drug users who develop the same AIDS diseases, and suffer and die, without the presence of HIV. Again, they are simply not reported as having AIDS.

Duesberg doesn't have all the answers either—he may not even have any of them. But he presents relevant facts the HIV theorists refuse to deal with, still, five years after he first suggested that the Emperor might not be wearing any clothes. If Duesberg and the other HIV-theory dissenters are wrong, then no harm, in fact only good, can come from discovering that. If they are right, inconvenient though that is to the government, the scientific and medical bureaucracies and the multibillion-dollar drug industry, it *would* be useful information for the rest of us, especially people with HIV and full-blown AIDS. Including Magic Johnson.

—Bob Guccione, Jr.

AIDS

WORDS FROM THE FRONT

HIV is being linked to a catastrophic revival of tuberculosis. VICTORIA A. BROWNWORTH reports on this widely ignored, terrifying "twin epidemic."

IN 1973, THE LAST TUBERculosis sanatorium in the United States closed and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) declared the disease, which had 50 years before afflicted nearly one-quarter of the nation's population, completely under control in the U.S. The number of reported cases of TB continued to decline each year by between 5 and 10 percent.

But in 1986, five years into the AIDS epidemic, TB was once again on the rise. The reason for the resurgence: HIV.

The CDC statistics are terrifying. There are approximately ten million people in the U.S. infected with latent or inactive TB today. One to two million Americans are HIV positive. The majority of people with TB *and* HIV are asymptomatic and don't know they are carriers of the disease. What's worse, they are infectious—potential spreaders of TB. And increasingly, the two diseases are overlapping.

Donald E. Kopanoff, associate director of the Centers for Disease Control's tuberculosis division.

"We could easily refer to this as twin epidemics," said Donald E. Kopanoff, associate director for the Division of TB Elimination at the CDC. "We are definitely going to begin to see more and more cases of active TB as the HIV epidemic spreads," he added. "There is a connection between the two epidemics that cannot be ignored."

But that connection *is* being ignored, even though the Mortality and Morbidity Weekly Reports (MMWR) released by the CDC have been cataloging HIV-related outbreaks of TB for over two years.

At three hospitals in Manhattan a particularly virulent TB outbreak in June 1991 struck many AIDS patients and several health-care workers, including one physician, who died.

Similar outbreaks have been reported in other cities with high numbers of AIDS cases, including Miami and Dade County, Florida; Detroit and other Michigan counties; and San Francisco. The outbreaks have occurred in clinics, hospitals, drug rehabilitation centers, and AIDS housing units. All have been HIV-related, and over one-third of the infected patients have died. Over 98 percent of the cases occurred in persons already infected with HIV.

U.S. Surgeon General Antonia C. Novello puts it succinctly: "TB in this country is on the increase due in large part to persons with HIV. Even more worrisome, in the last year, the CDC has become aware of HIV-related outbreaks of multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB).

"The epidemic of HIV, then, has caused the current epidemic of TB, which *must* be brought under control."

THE HEIGHT OF THE TB epidemic was a century ago. TB was the health scourge of the 19th century, killing hundreds of thousands in all social and economic classes. By the mid-'60s antibiotics had all but eradicated TB, so that many Americans have never even heard of the disease, which was as much a household word then as AIDS is today.

HIV could change all that. TB is easily spread through an airborne bacterium and most commonly infects the lungs (this is the only form of TB that is contagious, although other forms of TB—spinal, bone, and kidney—are also being found in people with HIV). It is spread most easily in places with poor ventilation—from crowded office buildings with sealed windows to subways to prisons to crack houses. It infects people with poor diet and lowered immune systems most readily—the poor, drug users, and persons with HIV. And it has become one of the most common opportunistic infections among people with AIDS: In one study in San Francisco, 11 percent of autopsied AIDS patients were discovered to have previously undiagnosed TB, although it was just recently added to the list of opportunistic infections resulting in an AIDS diagnosis.

The link between the two diseases has already created a public health catastrophe: a new strain of TB. It is that strain of the disease, called multidrug-resistant TB, that has been responsible for the most ferocious outbreaks in the past two years—and the most deaths. And it is that strain that has raised another perilous issue: quarantine.

Prior to the advent of antibiotics, TB was treated most commonly by quarantining the infected person, usually in a sanatorium just outside the town or city. Sanatoriums provided a cleaner, more healthy atmosphere for the TB patient, including a controlled and nutritious diet, good ventilation, and plenty of rest. Even after the advent of antibiotic treatment, quarantining was still used as a method of preventing further spread of the disease.

But AIDS activists have, since the onset of the AIDS epidemic, resisted the idea of quarantine for people with HIV, citing the civil liberties infringements. Now, the fear of a multidrug-resistant strain of TB has made both physicians and public health officials aware of the possible need for such

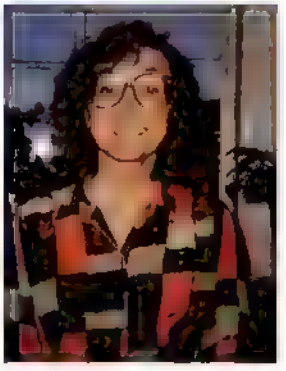
action.

The public health ramifications of an epidemic of MDR-TB cannot be overestimated, say Kopanoff and other HIV and TB specialists. Treatment of MDR-TB is extremely difficult, and some of those at highest risk for the disease—intravenous drug users and other drug abusers—are the least likely to seek treatment or maintain it. And *unlike* HIV, TB is easily transmitted.

Kopanoff does not deny that there are obvious links between TB and immunosuppressive disease, but notes a clear distinction. "HIV is a virus, TB is a bacterium, so they are not the same. Chronic fatigue syndrome is so new a disease in terms of our knowledge of it that we simply have no data on whether CFS predisposes someone to TB or even HIV. What we *do* know, categorically and historically, is that people who are in generally poor health are more susceptible to being infected. Severe CFS would cause such a degree of overall poor health that it would be difficult to ward off infection. Yes, those people *are* at greater risk."

Elizabeth B. Cooper, staff counsel on the ACLU's AIDS Project.

"We are definitely going to begin to see more and more cases of active TB as the HIV epidemic spreads. There is a connection between the two epidemics that cannot be ignored."



Dr. Gisela Schecter, director of the TB Control Unit at San Francisco General Hospital.

DR. GISELA SCHECTER IS DIRECTOR OF THE TB Control Unit at San Francisco General Hospital. San Francisco General, which has pioneered treatment of AIDS patients nationwide, has treated more patients with AIDS than almost any other hospital in the country. Schecter is acutely aware of the health-care crisis brewing over HIV and TB and said that there had been several outbreaks of TB in AIDS housing units in San Francisco.

Schecter noted that those at highest risk for TB are intravenous drug users, crack users, people with HIV, and those who have had TB that has been ineffectively treated. "We're going to be seeing more and more of this," said Schecter, "and in cities where you have a crossover population of gays, bisexuals, and IV drug users, you're going to have a higher incidence of TB."

Dr. Iris L. Davis, director of education at the AIDS Center of St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center in Manhattan has written extensively about the growing complication of HIV and TB. Like Kopanoff and Schecter, she believes the problem is at crisis level. Davis said TB is one of the greatest risk factors for HIV-infected persons today.

Treatment for common TB consists of a schedule of three antibiotics taken together. Treatment for an otherwise healthy person requires little actual hospitalization, but takes between six and nine months of continuous treatment. For an HIV-infected person treatment lasts nearly 12 months.

But MDR-TB requires much longer treatment: at least 18 months in an otherwise healthy person and up to 24 months in a person with HIV. During the majority of the treatment period, the patient may remain infectious. In addition, the drugs used to treat MDR-TB are injectable and require hospitalization or constant medical supervision. These drugs are also far more toxic than those used to treat common TB and are also increasingly difficult to obtain.

Streptomycin, which was once the most commonly used drug against TB, is being phased out by its only distributor in the U.S., Eli Lilly Co., as of February 1992. And while the drug is marketed and manufactured in other countries, the production of the drug doesn't meet FDA standards and is not approved for use in the U.S.

The drug is processed in the U.S. from raw product made in France. But in late 1991, France stopped using certain purification processes in the manufacture of the raw materials for streptomycin. The FDA will not approve use of the raw product without the process and Lilly has stated that in order to produce the raw product themselves an entire new plant would have to be built.

The streptomycin dearth, said Kopanoff, has created a deadly situation. For although 95 percent of TB cases in persons without HIV infection are cured through drug therapy, in cases of MDR-TB in persons with HIV, "at least 50 percent of the patients will die of TB." And, add other experts such as Davis, an additional 25 to 35 percent will die from complications of HIV before the TB is cured.

According to Kopanoff, the fundamental problem with MDR-TB is the length of time the disease remains infectious.

Which makes the question of quarantine, whether in hospitals or other facilities, all the more poignant, as it amounts to what very well might be a sentence of life imprisonment for the person with HIV and MDR-TB.

That, according to Robert Levy, senior staff attorney at the New York Civil Liberties Union, presents an increasingly serious civil liberties question for people with HIV who contract TB in any form.

Levy, who is currently working on several cases related to HIV and TB, notes that homelessness and drug abuse have increased the number of TB cases in New York City astronomically in the past few years. Kopanoff said that the number of cases of TB in New York had increased "38 percent over the previous year. It is estimated that 10 percent of the population of New York is infected."

That, says Levy, is why quarantine cannot even be considered. "It's bad public health policy.

"It is only a last resort for people with TB who refuse treatment—then perhaps it could be argued. But I don't think we have those cases yet."

Ronald Bogard is the general counsel for the New York City Department of Health. He also heads the New York City Recalcitrant TB Task Force for the Department of Health. Bogard believes that there will be situations under which quarantine—or "detention," as the Health Department calls it—is necessary to protect the public health.

"We want to stress the importance of trying to get compliance from a patient *without* detention," Bogard says. "Detention isn't in the best interest of anyone unless the TB-infected person presents a health risk.

But some of these people are homeless or are in SROs [single room occupancy hotels]. It would be irresponsible to leave a person with MDR-TB and AIDS in an SRO with other people with AIDS—that could cause a serious outbreak of TB."

Bogard points to the fact that there have been only 34 detentions ordered in 18 months by New York City as proof that quarantine in *not* widely used.

Kopanoff adds that quarantine laws are still in force in most states and should be used by public health officials only after all other avenues have been exhausted.

Levy is concerned about the public health aspect of the HIV/TB link and is currently representing a case for a man with MDR-TB who wants to go home from the hospital. "What we are urging is more outreach to the community, more homecare availability, so that people with

the disease *can* treat themselves at home." Levy is also looking at litigation for homeless persons being treated as detainees in hospitals due to fear they will not return to complete their treatment, which would result in more spread of the disease.

Levy said that public health awareness is lagging in this area, that although there are around 600 cases of TB among homeless persons in New York, there are few treatment facilities available to them. "We have to be concentrating on public health policy to prevent the spread of TB, not on quarantining people. It's medically unsound. We have to be sure these people get due process."

Elizabeth Cooper, staff attorney at the AIDS Project of the national headquarters of the American Civil Liberties Union, is concerned that increased hysteria over AIDS will cause the quarantine issue to be raised again—and that TB is the natural window of opportunity to raise it. She said: "If we *do* quarantine, we have to make sure we don't just go after people who are HIV positive, but make a clear distinction that TB is the reason for the quarantine."

That will be more difficult in areas where HIV is most prevalent. Kopanoff said that although the rise in TB cases overall was 9 percent last year, in areas with high concentrations of HIV-infected persons it was as high as 40 percent. In a 1989 study conducted by the CDC surveying TB clinics nationwide, the overall incidence of HIV infection among persons with TB was 3.4 percent. But in New York City it was 46.3 percent; in Newark, 33.6 percent; in Miami, 23.5 percent; and in Boston, 26.6 percent. Controlling TB, particularly MDR-TB, in areas where drug abuse is rampant and HIV is epidemic, is, according to experts like Davis, the latest public health emergency in the U.S.

One problem, said Schecter, is diagnosis and awareness. Physicians, she said, aren't looking for TB any more and as a consequence often miss the signs—which, she notes, are often confused with symptoms of other diseases, like chronic fatigue syndrome or even HIV—symptoms such as persistent tiredness, low-grade fever, night sweats, and weight loss.

Schecter also wants to see more testing for TB and use of preventive therapy. She suggests that anyone who is HIV positive have antibiotic therapy to ward off the possibility of infection. "We have to educate both physicians and the public that TB is fairly easily spread in certain environments, it doesn't require intimate contact like HIV does for transmission. We need screening in health facilities and it should be done on a regular basis to avoid outbreaks in hospitals and residential housing for people with drug problems or with AIDS."

Kopanoff said that it is important to remember that the very places that people with AIDS or HIV disease are going for treatment—like hospitals and clinics—can be breeding grounds for TB, especially MDR-TB.

Kopanoff suggests that public awareness and education is the answer to preventing a full-scale public health catastrophe. "People need to go to state and federal representatives and demand action, response. Tell them to do something about this epidemic. It's criminal not to be able to attack a disease that we *can* cure. We can't cure HIV at this time, but we can cure TB."

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MOVING IMAGES

Director Mike Leigh's films entertain despite the fact that nothing really happens. By JONATHAN BERNSTEIN.

Discomfort and joy. *Left*, director Mike Leigh, and *below*, scene from his film *Life is Sweet*.

Mike Leigh's audiences always look as if they're undergoing the ultimate grueling experience in bowel-loosening horror. Cringing spectators follow the onscreen action between the cracks of their fingers, punctuated by frequent sharp intakes of breath as white knuckles tighten around the arms of seats and companions. Leigh doesn't traffic in dismemberment, pornoviolence, or megabudget whammies. In his legendary U.K. TV plays (*Abigail's Party*, *Meantime*, *Nuts in May*) and features (1988's lament to Thatcher's fiefdom, *High Hopes*, and the current *Life Is Sweet*), nothing really happens. But it's the *way* nothing happens, the way the minutiae of modern living are pitilessly magnified.

Traditionally, America gets its reading of the Real England through the oppressive shadowland of Morrissey, Depeche Mode, or Dave Kendall. But Mike Leigh's painful version of his native land is an altogether less illusory package and one which will ultimately prove more enduring. This England is one of stupefied expressions, abandoned hot dog vans, screeching laughs, and ill-fitting anoraks. While Leigh's recurring themes (intolerance, survival, hope) may be universal, his language and characters will require applied effort on the part of U.S. audiences. Perseverance pays dividends. Current Hollywood attempts at representing the "ordinary person" bestow saintHoods and crocodile tears; Leigh's gaze may be pitiless, but his everyday characters are anything but ordinary and their lifespans linger on well past the closing credits.

Regarded as a divisive filmmaker in his native England, Leigh has been accused of patronizing his working-class subjects, zeroing in on excruciating conversational foibles, catastrophic lapses in taste, unconscious cruelty, and failure to communicate. The director dismisses those critics as middle-class pedants, stubbornly pronouncing, "People that get it, get it."

Clearly an actor's director, Leigh's British repertory company has included the likes of Gary Oldman, Tim Roth, and Julie Walters. Actors gravitate toward Leigh because he allows them to play an integral part in the creative process. His films have no scripts, just unformed notions swimming around in his head that lead to intense and arcane periods of discussion, rehearsal, and research. During this genesis, the actors use real-life acquaintances to construct characters from the inside out.

"You're dealing with acting in its pure, organic, plastic form," pronounces Leigh. "There's no limit other than that which is bound by propriety and feasibility. For instance, if I said this woman's had a hysterectomy, it wouldn't be appropriate to expect the actress to have a hysterectomy, but she may go and talk to someone who had."

Bulimia is the ailment of choice in *Life Is Sweet* (sort of a *Roseanne Goes to South London*), which for all the trademark discomfort it causes displays a tenderness and philanthropy hitherto undetected in Leigh's work. "I've always been saying that life could and should be better, sweeter. But up to now, I've said it by showing how horrible it is."

COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love **(Warner Bros.). Blood and sperm. Arched backs. Trembling thighs. Songs of infinite pain, loss, and regret dredged up from suffering souls. God, I love the Red Hot Chili Peppers. But as for this adaptation of Oscar Hijuelos's sticky pages, the translation to celluloid seems a little flaccid despite a cast that includes the post-Franco, postfabulous Antonio Banderas, ever-ripe Cathy Moriarty, and Desi Arnaz, Jr., as his own dad.**

Hook **(TriStar). A magical little boy, the little boy inside us all. A wondrous far-off land where . . . whatever. Julia Roberts was lensing her role as Tinkerbell at the exact same time she was losing 150 pounds of ugly fat (Kiefer Sutherland), and her presence should attract ambulance chasers hot to scrutinize the screen for any sign of stress. Some people never grow up.**

Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country **(Paramount). Kim Cattrall, Christian Slater, and Whoopi Goldberg squeeze into the Trekkie tunics alongside the old folks for a final joyride. Crazy baldhead Patrick Stewart and his underlings wait in the wings.**

Bugsy **(TriStar). Ooh, Las Vegas. A reputedly scabrous James Toback script, a new and bloody side of Barry Levinson, and Annette Bening going all out to prove *The Grifters* was no fluke. All this, plus scenes of weird sex, makes the inevitable parade of revealing Warren Beatty interviews seem a small price to pay.**

The Prince of Tides **(Columbia). It's a Streisand Christmas! First the box set; now a new movie. It should have been a miniseries, but Pat Conroy's overwritten, riveting slab of a best-seller is now on the big screen as directed by Streisand who, we hope, has left its eccentricities intact.**

JONATHAN BERNSTEIN

LOGO BY CHRISTOPHER GALLO

DREAMING AMERICA

NOTES OF A NEW JACK

BY SCOTT POULSON-BRYANT

All I Know

SO YOU ASK YOURSELF QUESTIONS ABOUT where the world is heading. You spend October watching black conservatives make a splashy debut on national television. You stare at your double cassette deck and choose between the dope new Digital stuff and the Ice Cube album that threatens to torch your meager apartment with the articulate zeal of young black rage.

You listen patiently as your 12-year-old cousin (who wasn't even born when you heard the first strains of that overblown urban rhyme-style) calls off a list of rap tapes that he needs: Naughty by Nature, De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest. And you watch him as he listlessly thumbs through your articles that your mother stores away, finally assured that this writing thing is going somewhere. You tell your cousin to go read a book. You tell him to do his homework. You tell him to turn off *Yo! MTV Raps*. But that's his thing: rap and Nintendo. You tell him stories about his heroes. You tell him about that time with Dream Warriors, when the cops in Montreal suspected you and the group and their crew of carrying drugs in the group's stretch limo. You tell him about the time a photographer asked De La to grease their torsos up for the shoot, and how they basically said fuck you and walked out. You tell him how Chuck D likes vanilla milkshakes from Carvel, and how he really mellows out when he has one. Or how you went to high school with Grand Daddy I.U. and the UBC; how our barber Rev's son is in KMD; how Flavor Flav is your mother's boss's husband's cousin. You like the excited look in his eyes and the grin on his lips as you recount the stories in vivid detail.

You also think about what it would be like if you yourself were a rapper, romancing your community into a constituency and jumpstarting them into accelerated style warriors and conscious partiers. But you are a music writer, a critic, a tastemaker, and you're too old to be going through an identity crisis. Perhaps, however, this is more a crisis of faith. Perhaps, having reached your 25th year, having lived with hip hop as a teenager, then deserted it in boredom, then returned to it when you realized that it informed precisely how you thought of the world, even from your suburban, middle-class, Ivy League perch—perhaps you've just allowed the numbskulls to get to you. In other words, you wanted to be liberated by hip hop, set free by its rhythmic possibilites, by its gloating, shameless self-invention, by its sheer willingness to make its funky presence known. You took rap to be some kind of second coming, some kind of vehicle in which to drive home all the important, bonecrushing points about being young and black in this time and place. You constantly look for the intelligence, but you get sideswiped by the inanity. You constantly look for the sensitivity, but you get brutalized by the callousness. You realize: Not only are you old, but you're soft, too.

You look for the intelligence in rap, but you're sideswiped by the inanity. You look for the sensitivity, but you're brutalized by the callousness. You realize: Not only are you old, but you're soft, too.

You ask a brother who's slightly younger, and knee-deep in the Hip Hop Nation whether hip hop will grow up with your generation. Or will you spend your time interpreting it for youth or youthful wannabes? The guy tells you that hip hop has already grown up, it's adult music with adult themes. You ask him if it's just a boys club, a straight boys club. And he answers yes with a straight face, making no attempts at explanation. You ask him if it will forever be as sexist and as homophobic as so much of it seems to be. He says yes, because urban black guys tend to be sexist and homophobic and that's reflected in the music. You talk about hardness, realness, hip hop's desire to represent the tough stance of masculinity. He tells you that black men *are* hard, harder than anybody, so hip hop must reflect that. You ask him if he's hard. "Not as hard as I could be. Or should be," he says. For a second, you see a glimmer of uncertainty on his face. Did I just say something dumb? he seems to think. Then, it's gone. Confident that he's bringing the noise the correct way, he continues to talk. Do you think, he asks you, that rappers really care what you write about them? Do you think they care how they're interpreted by writers? Some of them care, you tell him. And whether they do or not, they still need to be interpreted. They need to be taken to task for some of the wayward thinking about women and sexuality and race that has poisoned our minds. What else informs hip hop? you ask him, steadily—what else informs the way we incorporate it into our lives? I don't know, the guy says. Hip hop is all I know. Hip hop, he says, is all I care to know.

You still imagine what it would be like to be a rapper. You know all about role playing, and you know all about exploitation. What kind of rapper would you be? Would you talk smooth like Kane? Would you throw down hard like L.L.? Would you romp in the kudzu of your mind like Prince Be of P.M. Dawn? Would you drop science like Chuck D? You would try to do it all. And you would do anything to make sure the voice was always being heard.

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T-Bone Burnett
Daniel Lanois
Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds
Jane Siberry with k.d. lang
CAN
Neneh Cherry
Crime & The City Solution
Graeme Revell
David Darling
Patti Smith and Fred Smith
U2

Music from the Motion Picture Soundtrack

Until The End Of The World

A film by Wim Wenders

* except the U2 track, which, truthfully, is also on another album.

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SPINS

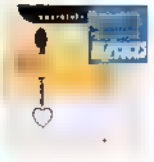
REVIEWS EDITED BY JIM GREER

PLATTER DU JOUR

THE CLASH
The Clash on Broadway
Epic

GENERATION X
Perfect Hits
Chrysalis

BUZZCOCKS
Operators Manual: Buzzcocks Best
I.R.S.



Seems like there's a little punk rock *Pet Sematary* going on in the U.K. Not only are reanimated versions of the Damned, the Lurkers, X Ray Spex, Sham 69, and the U.K. Subs back on the boards, exuding as much pogomatic power as thickened waists, high cholesterol counts, and shortness of breath will permit, but suddenly there's a steady flow of commemorative material such as this trio of misty-eyed retrospectives. I always used to think that the best punk records would come to have the same resonances as golden-age Motown 45s: timelessness, euphoria, rejuvenation. Sadly, once-cherished howls of economic hopelessness and unfocused rage now sound like angry babies.

Even the only band that mattered. The Clash looked like a great rock group and talked like a great rock group and participated in photo shoots like a great rock group. But you can't, as yet, squeeze the Clash's *real* greatest hits—its quiffs, cheekbones, hats, muscles, stares, and stances—inside a box set. What you can do is wonder at the sheer mess of a legacy the Clash left: from the muffled bark of the band's first album to the mumbled meanderings of its final days. Of the 60-odd timepieces included herein, only "Safe European Home" seems to have grown in stature, and only the still awesome "Complete Control" finds the band sounding worthy of the kudos *Rolling Stone* tossed so enthusiastically its way.

No one tossed anything but edged weapons Generation X's way. Reviled, degraded, disdained, and dogged as pretty-boy punks, the band's currency was so low, lead singer Billy Idol had to flee the country in mortification. His relocation provides the reflected glory that gives a hindsight glow to this collection. This trip through Billy's back pages is good for some extended smileage. From ludicrous early yelps like "Your Generation," "Ready Steady Go," and "King Rocker" through to the genuinely heartstoppingly magical "Dancing With Myself," *Perfect Hits* proves a pretty good blueprint for future outrages.

Far and away the best, and certainly the only lump-in-throat-inducing punk assemblage is the Buzzcocks set. The highlights just come tumbling over each other: the reverse echo leading into "What Do I Get?" and the way "I Don't Mind" dispenses with any traditional introduction and just starts like front man Pete Shelley can't wait to get into pouring it all out. The Buzzcocks were fueled by internal friction: Pete Shelley's thematic preoccupations (gender ambiguity; mortality; yearning for, while simultaneously flinching from, intimacy) and delivery (he didn't so much sing songs as bleat them) seemed to discomfit no-nonsense northern guitarist Steve Diggle to such an extent that Diggle tried to drown out the singer through the ferocity of his fret work. This mixture of vulnerability and violence rendered the band unique. It also gave it a charmed life.

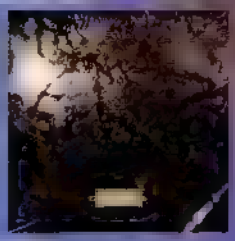
Following its first album and its accompanying run of peerless singles, the group released "Ever Fallen in Love?" one of the few singles in recent decades to fully merit the label *classic rock*. It was taken from *Love Bites*, a rushed, underwritten second album, most of whose tracks now, by some fluke, sound terrific: "Nostalgia," "Walking Distance" "Nothing Left" and "ESP." Whatever alchemy kept the band's star in the ascendant started at that point to prove elusive. Subsequent singles ("Everybody's Happy Nowadays," "Promises") seemed both forced and on the wrong side of fey. The third album, *A Different Kind of Tension* found Shelley less inspired than incontinent. At their best, though, as they are on over 75 percent of *Operators Manual*, the Buzzcocks remind you how it felt to be young, miserable, lonely, heartsick, and alienated. It felt great.

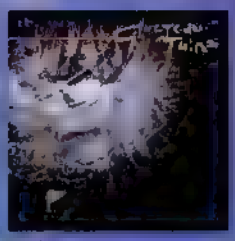
Jonathan Bernstein

ILLUSTRATION BY AMY GUIP

COCTEAU TWINS

THE COMPLETE BACK CATALOG AVAILABLE IN THE U.S. FOR THE FIRST TIME!





All of the Cocteau Twins' EPs on CD for the first time in the U.S. and in their original

The Handy Omniscient SPIN Rating System

● = Go directly to your local record store. Buy this album. Immediately. Kill if you must.

◕ = Whoa! Slow down, pal. This album is pretty good, but you can't buy everything in the store. Can you?

● = Stop it. Put that down. Go buy something to eat instead. You have to eat, too, you know.

ICE CUBE

Death Certificate

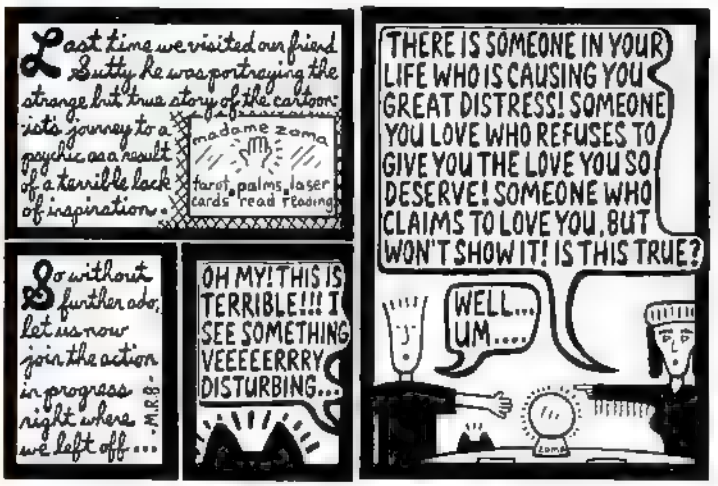
Priority

Death Certificate, the second full-length disc from Ice Cube, is rife with the kind of big, slap-happy beats that made his debut, *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*, so riveting. The beats on *Death Certificate* are reminiscent of what B.F. Skinner called kinesthetic organicity: In other words, they're the kinds of things you want to do just because they feel good. The secret to his adrenalin-drenched funk seems to be in its looseness: Public Enemy, Son of Bazerk, and EPMD may have explored the farthest realms of sonic density and the use of controlled dissonance, but never with such a loose-kneed approach. Similarly, other rappers have attempted to integrate vitriolic politics with raw street knowledge, but not with such haiku-like acuity.

On the neg side, like *AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted*, the new album is marred by excessively cartoonish and topical between-song scenarios, and lyrics that are at times deeply offensive While Ice Cube's grooves are as gratifyingly exact as ever, he's begun to slip the occasional message into his lyrics, and the results are mixed. As usual, Cube is unapologetic in his portrayal of misogyny; the most generous thing we can do is assume that he's portraying sexism rather than promoting it, and knows the difference. "Givin' Up the Nappy Dug Out" castigates a promiscuous young woman, but the vivid, almost pornographic descriptions that Cube invokes ("She keeps nuts in her mouth like the bitch was a squirrel") seem to reflect a spirit of lascivious pleasure, rather than condemnation. "Look Who's Burnin'," the song that follows shortly after, is also a kind of message rap. But when Ice Cube teaches, he does it the way that Lou Gossett, Jr., taught self-defense in *An Officer and a Gentleman*: He beats the shit out of you. Example: "Bitch don't try to act surprised / You shoulda put a sock on the pickle / And your pussy wouldn't be blowing smoke signals."

While the harshly negative material on side one of *Death Certificate* begins with a funeral and ends with a track called "Death," side two begins with a song cleverly called "The Birth," and is, musically speaking, more upbeat. On "I Wanna Kill Sam" the album achieves an almost George Clinton–esque sense of celebratory freakiness. The bass line is generous, messy, and changes pace every few bars. Lyrically, however,

Little Sutty's Quest for Music *by Mark Blackwell*


Last time we visited our friend Sutty he was portraying the strange but true story of the cartoonist's journey to a psychic as a result of a terrible lack of inspiration...
madame zama
tarot cards
palms read
laser readings
So without further ado, let us now join the action in progress right where we left off...
M.R.S.
OH MY! THIS IS TERRIBLE!!! I SEE SOMETHING VEEEEERRRY DISTURBING...
THERE IS SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE WHO IS CAUSING YOU GREAT DISTRESS! SOMEONE YOU LOVE WHO REFUSES TO GIVE YOU THE LOVE YOU SO DESERVE! SOMEONE WHO CLAIMS TO LOVE YOU, BUT WON'T SHOW IT! IS THIS TRUE?
WELL... UM....

side two is anything but "lite."

"Horny Lil' Devil," the third track on the "Life" side, is a rant against miscegenation, during which Ice Cube attacks white men for having sex with black women and for trying to "fuck me out of my land and my manhood." This cut in particular reflects the influence of Cube's newfound association with minister Louis Farrakkan and the Nation of Islam on his lyric writing; the song is riddled with homophobic language and references to white men as devils. "Black Korea" is a 47-second-long racist complaint against the fact that every time Cube wants to buy beer he has to go to a Korean market. On "True to the Game," successful buppies who move out of the hood get a taste of Cube's venom—having already bashed women, gays and Koreans, he makes his insensitivity to the suffering of other minority groups complete. "Tryin' to be white, or a Jew / But ask yourself: Who are they to be equal to?"

Dimitri Ehrlich

VARIOUS ARTISTS

I'm Your Fan: The Songs of Leonard Cohen

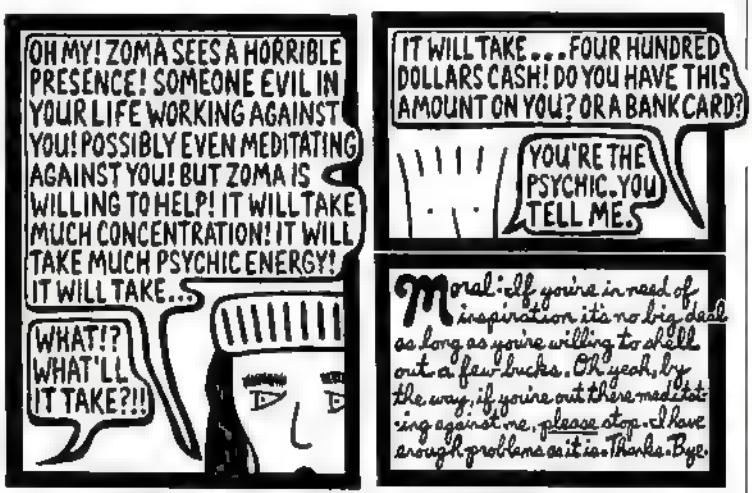
Alianlr

Nick Cave is the only tributary on this album of Leonard Cohen covers who seems to know exactly why he's exhumed smart rock's folk ancestry—to make sure the corpse is really dead. His voice in "Tower of Song" teeters, stumbles, and slurs like a rambunctious, bored drunk in a coffeehouse. Good-natured café-goers will welcome the display of intemperance, even if they themselves are not prone to such entertaining displays. The inclusion of Robert Forster's more serious rendering of the same song secures Cave's outsider cool.

For "I Can't Forget," the Pixies wheel their standard pleasing, noisy sound into place to carry the burden of Cohen's meaningful lyrics and workaday songwriting. The result is supporting evidence for the argument that we have reached the end of history. So is R.E.M.'s noisome "First We Take Manhattan," but at least Stipe sticks to basics and doesn't try to affect the kind of crooning you hear on pop radio in France (where they love Leonard). Oddly, this sped-up, pulsating merry-go-round music is exactly what Dead Famous People succeed in pulling off in "True Love Leaves No Traces." John Cale plays it safe with the pretty "Hallelujah," as do the respectful Lloyd Cole and Bill Pritchard

Leonard Cohen is a mine field for would-be antiquarians, best left to the true sentimentalists (like Cave or even R.E.M.) who already know their way. This album won't convert anyone, but true believers will appreciate all the attention their man is getting

Nathaniel Wice


OH MY! ZOMA SEES A HORRIBLE PRESENCE! SOMEONE EVIL IN YOUR LIFE WORKING AGAINST YOU! POSSIBLY EVEN MEDITATING AGAINST YOU! BUT ZOMA IS WILLING TO HELP! IT WILL TAKE MUCH CONCENTRATION! IT WILL TAKE MUCH PSYCHIC ENERGY! IT WILL TAKE...
WHAT!? WHAT'LL IT TAKE?!!
IT WILL TAKE...FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS CASH! DO YOU HAVE THIS AMOUNT ON YOU? OR A BANK CARD?
YOU'RE THE PSYCHIC. YOU TELL ME.
Moral: If you're in need of inspiration it's no big deal as long as you're willing to shell out a few bucks. Oh yeah, by the way, if you're out there meditating against me, please stop. I have enough problems as it is. Thanks. Bye.

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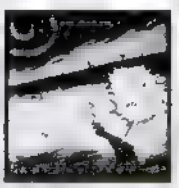
NO MAN
Wow The West Was Won
(LP/CA/CD)

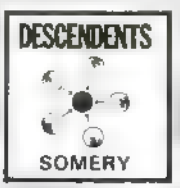


ULTRAVIOLET CATASTROPHE
Ultraviolet Catastrophe
(LP/CA/CD)

STILL AVAILABLE

BAD BRAINS
I Against I
(LP/CA/CD)

BLACK FLAG
Wasted Again
(LP/CA/CD)

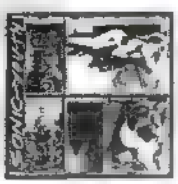


DESCENDENTS
Somery
(2 LP SET/XTD CA/XTD CD)

DINOSAUR JR.
You're Living All Over Me
(LP/CA/CD)

MINUTEMEN
Double Nickles On The Dime
(2 LP SET/XTD CA/XTD CD)

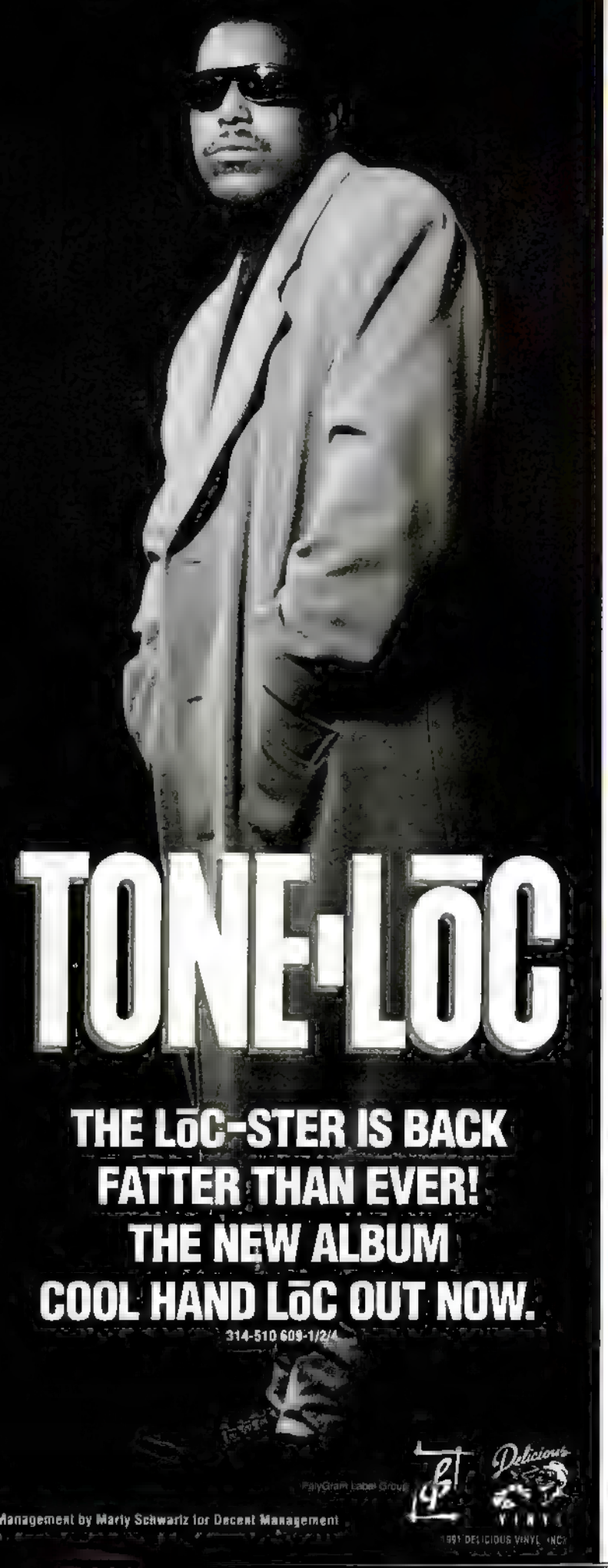
HUSKER DU
Zen Arcade
(2 LP SET/XTD CA/XTD CD)



SONIC YOUTH
Sister
(LP/CA/CD)

SCREAMING TREES
Anthology
(2 LP SET/XTD CA/XTD CD)

SOUNDGARDEN
Ultramega OK
(LP/CA/CD)



WORLD BEAT

Guitar Paradise, Etc.

BY RICHARD GEHR

THIS IS THE STORY OF YET another perfect Afropop sound: The impact of Zairean rumba on the music of Kenya was mostly more a matter of necessity than of choice. Kenyan musicians, with a rich, rough roots sound all their own, had made the mistake of aping Western hits during the early '70s, strutting their stuff in the local tourist hotels while expatriate Zairean musicians were sweeping local audiences off their feet with flowing golden guitar lines and down-home Afrocuban rhythms.

Things changed in 1975, though, with the emergence of *benga*, which offered the diplomatic compromise of adding the disco beat that would eventually define *soukous* to those glowing rhythm guitars. *Guitar Paradise of East Africa* (Earthworks) overflows with the swooping guitar movements that distinguish the *benga* beat, offering prime samples from seven of Kenya's twenty-some districts. Styles range from the relatively gritty sound of Swahili to the lure of Luo guitarists mimicking the lute called *nyatiti*. The most outstanding moments belong to Kikuya's Les Mangelepa, whose nine-minute "Harare" ebbs and flows like an endless suite of nonstop guitars and proud horns.

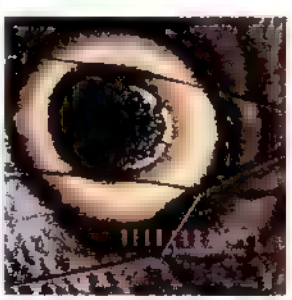
FOR WHATEVER REASONS, THOUGH, NO AFRICAN NOISE IS TRENDIER IN EUROPE of late than that sung by women of southern Mali's Wassoulou region. *The Wassoulou Sound: Women of Mali* (Stern's) is a beguiling and beautiful compilation highlighting five of the region's most authoritative vocalists who sing deep, Arab-tinged call-and-response patterns. The

DEAD CAN DANCE

A Passage in Time

4AD/Rykodisc

A clue to Dead Can Dance's appeal is that when the band is onstage, it plays its eerie blend of moody European tunes, middle eastern melodies, weird instruments, and desert rhythms really loud. More than any "alternative" band today, DCD digs the past, and digs it deeply, coming up with 14th-century Italian saltarellos and troubadour tunes and crafting these influences into spectral, and occasionally delicious, original material. The band is pretentious as all hell—album covers with crypts and Bosch images, song titles like "Mephisto" and "The Host of Seraphim." But though plenty of their fans are addicted to clove cigarettes and black eyeliner, Dead Can Dance also sells a lot of records to early-music highbrows, classical fans, and smart new-agers—maybe not a plus in your book, but something of a feat in an era when eclecticism is generally reduced to funk-metal-pop-rap muck.



Now composed of Lisa Gerrard, Brendan Perry, and a shifting cast of support players, Dead Can Dance began as a goth dance band in Australia before moving to London and the hazy arms of 4AD Records. *A Passage in Time*, DCD's first domestic release, compiles the more expansive ghost dances of its last few records, along with two unreleased cuts, one of which is a goofy atmospheric foray into Native American chants. But while *A Passage in Time* includes much of DCD's best material, the main problem here is the one that mars all the band's albums—Brendan Perry makes the music glow and pulsate, but with few exceptions (on "Severance," particularly), his Morrisonesque croon flattens DCD's aura. Of course, he has to compete with the black-angel death songs of Lisa Gerrard, whose voice is like a crystal that resonates as it cuts to the bone.

Erik Davis

instrumentation intriguingly blends trad drums and strings with mod synths, and sometimes takes on unexpectedly swinging jazzlike qualities. The CD's documentation is minimal, but the music itself is plainly compelling. These are female voices of authority, often tough and earthy, whose tones rise and fall with the necessity of action, hunting, and work, sliding back and forth gracefully between then and now.

BUT FOR SHEER COSMIC DISJUNCTION BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE, NOTHING compares to *El Buya* (Barbarity) by the Swiss-Moroccan confab calling itself Aisha Kandisha's Jarring Effects. There's a woozy elegance (reminiscent of both Adrian Sherwood and the Mad Professor) to this neodub project, particularly in the sped-up intros and panning echoes. In fact, staticky power-plant interferences suggest the origin of a new musical subgenre entirely: call it shortwave rock. But the throbbing Castillian guitars, Arabic chants, and ululating drums tilt it more toward the trad than the rad. And that's better than just all right.

Paradise found.

WONDERFUL WORLD

Azagas & Archibogs, *The Sixties Sound of Lagos Highlife* (Original Music); Roberto Pulido y Los Clasicos/Los Dos Gilbertos, *Conjunto Classics* (Rounder); *Jit—The Movie* (Earthworks); Lisandro Meza, *Lisandro's Cumbia* (World Circuit); M'Lumbo, *Life After Death* (Maitre'D)

2 LIVE CREW

Sports Weekend (As Nasty As They Wanna Be Part II)

Luke Records

PROFESSOR GRIFF

Kao's II Wiz*7*Dome

Luke Records

Malcolm Muggeridge, in surveying the human wreckage of this century, noted: "When mortal men try to live without God, they infallibly succumb to megalomania, or erotomania, or both. The raised fist or the raised phallus; Nietzsche or D.H. Lawrence." Gangster rap raises the fist; obscene rap, the phallus.

And then there's rapper Professor Griff, whose God—Allah—compels him to raise some thoughts and some consciousness in the process.

What a gulf between 2 Live Crew's newest erotomaniacal album—*Sports Weekend (As Nasty as They Wanna Be Part II)*—and Griff's latest, *Kao's II Wiz*7*Dome*. Luther Campbell promised his new album "will be more obscene than the last." He delivered. Griff's, like *CBS This Morning*, is breakfast—and lunch and dinner—for your head.

The cover picture on *Sports Weekend* speaks a thousand grotesqueries. The Crew, in bed and donning NBA Miami Heat caps, receive fellatio from four women. Alas, despite the NBA motif, there is no cut titled "24-Second Luther," just 28 cuts that include "Pop That Pussy," "A Fuck Is a Fuck," "Baby Baby Please (Just a Little More Head)," "Fuck Off," "12" Long," "Some Hot Head," "Balls," "Up a Girl's Ass," et cetera. Nietzsche would prefer "Happiness Is a Warm Gun," while D.H. Lawrence would puke.

If you liked *As Nasty As They Wanna Be*, you'll be tumescent over this album; that is, if you have time to listen between viewings of *Long Dong Silver*. "The Pussy Caper" is a five-and-a-half minute account of vaginal, anal, and oral intercourse

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Rude Boy

FEATURING THE CLASH

Rude Boy, starring Ray Gange and The Clash is a blend of drama, social documentary and concert film, featuring numerous live performances of The Clash from 1978, plus offstage and informal performance footage.

Available on Sony Music Video.

KIES UND GLANZ - GRIT AND GLITTER - GRÈS ET PAILLETTES
Marc Almond
"Tainted Love," "Sex Dwarf,"
There goes a strange decade.
Now Marc Almond unveils his
most ambitious project yet, and makes
the 80's look downright austere.
Tenement Symphony
The new album
Includes collaborations with Soft Cell partner,
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Featuring the Jacques Brel masterpiece,
"Jacky," and "Hand Over My Heart".
Available on Sire Cassettes and Compact Discs.

between a hooker and two men, sound effects included. This is the stuff that drove *2 Live Crew*'s trial expert, Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., (along with $300 per hour), to say Luther Campbell ranks with Joyce, Chaucer, and Shakespeare. "Ranks" is a word that fits.

Professor Griff on *Kao's* presents his rhyming views on race, genocide, drugs, religion, crime, corporations, and culture. As unhistorical and as racist and as paranoiac as some of these ideas are, they can't and shouldn't be ignored. America needs to understand its self-proclaimed public enemy(s).

Griff has so much to say on this album that sometimes the words spill out too fast to comprehend. Slow down, Griff, we want to hear it all. Surrender the role of the "fastest mouth in rap" for the sake of those who need to understand.

There is much downright cleverness on *Kao's* as well. When was the last time you heard a Herbie Hancock sample followed by a harmonica riff followed by a catchy title line like "incog-negro?"

Griff told me he wanted to sing on this album just as he did on *Pawns in the Game* but that Luther Campbell (this is on Luke Records, folks) wouldn't let him. A shame, because this artist can sing as well as he raps.

And he can raise thoughts, which makes one look forward to a time when Griff will be free of Luther Campbell's censorship of this considerable and growing talent. Griff is part of a dazzling First Amendment rainbow amid the gathering storm.

Jack Thompson

UNREST

Imperial

No. 6/Teenbeat

Unrest is one of those bands that seems destined for something. What that is, I don't know, but probably something good. Maybe the band could replace Paul Schaefer and the Bar Mitzvah Band From Hell on the *Letterman* show, or be voted the Sassiest Band in the Hemisphere, or perhaps just tour high schools as living examples of the second law of thermodynamics.

Unrest's three previous albums have shown that this rock band, if not the universe, strives for chaos. We're talking about chaos of genre. Guitarist, singer, and band leader Mark Robinson can pull off Kurt Weill-like pastiches, bubbly pop, Can-ish drones, or "Hard Luck Woman"–style power ballads with ease. Some bands' versatility harms their focus, but this is not a problem for Unrest. There are moments on this record that recall the finest Kiss, Neu, Neil Diamond, and Kenneth Anger—at the same time. A band this creative, this talented, and this bold cannot be ignored for much longer. *Imperial* may be the album for Unrest. (*available from No. 6, P.O. Box 3306, New York, NY 10185*)

Johan Kugelberg

TONE LŌC

Cool Hand Lōc

Delicious Vinyl

Tone Lōc could well be the guy that repossesses Melle Mel's car in "The Message" (it really was his *job* once), and in a sense, he is—he's the rare '90s rapper who acts like "The Message" never happened. You might think he scraped his great grody gravel-growl off the bottom of a garbage can behind a red-beans-and-rice restaurant (or from "Ten Foot Pole," off ZZ Top's aptly named hashish LP, *El Loco*). But I suspect he got it from Frankie Smith, whose "Double Dutch Bus" took the world by storm back in '81, and whose rap still showed evidence of vaudeville comics, carnival barkers, medicine men, AM DJs, and Dr. John.

Anyway, I was under the impression that Tone was gonna retire from stardom and return to kicking soccer

balls around, but his comeback is in character: On *Lōc-ed After Dark*, especially in his big bong hit "Cheeba Cheeba," he presented himself as one lazy sod (didn't even *write* the two platinum 45s!), and *Cool Hand* is the tossed-off work of a true burnout. The "Wild Thing" sequel is funnier than the "Funky Cold Medina" sequel—a surprise—and naturally the "Cheeba Cheeba" sequel beats the rote 12-gauge Compton crap. Though Tone's devilish bout with angelic Eldra Debarge doesn't have much of a melody, the other ballad wisely begs the Barry White question. And as for the doubled-over-

Fats Domino

BY JON YOUNG

The most unassuming of the rock'n'roll pioneers, Fats Domino lacked the animal charisma of Elvis Presley, the poetic wit of Chuck Berry, and the raw power of Little Richard. Instead, this rotund genius simply radiated charm, blending rippling New Orleans piano and warm, cuddly vocals. Between 1955 and 1962, Mr. D scored 36 Top 40 hits, and that doesn't account for the string of R&B smashes that began in 1950, before the white establishment discovered the big beat.

Get hip to his jive with *"They Call Me the Fat Man . . . ": The Legendary Imperial Recordings* (EMI), a mostly enticing four-CD feast that does have its little shortcomings. Collecting *one hundred* tracks ensures some duds—Fats wasn't infallible, especially in the '60s, when he eked out minor hits with slender material. Nor are his efforts enhanced by occasionally harsh digital mastering, or by a rigid preference for stereo masters over mono, which can drain the oomph from worthy tunes.

Still, Domino was always irresistible, even on idiotic throwaways like "Rockin' Bicycle" and "Hum Diddy Doo." At his best, Fats suggested your birthday, the Fourth of July, and Christmas rolled into one rousing package. Guided by bandleader Dave Bartholomew, whose supple ensemble included cool yakety saxmen Herbert Hardesty and Alvin "Red" Tyler, plus superdrummer Earl Palmer, Domino could swing the blues and put soul into the corniest Tin Pan Alley ditty.

Behold his sublime signature tune, "The Fat Man," cut in 1949. After a rollicking boogie-woogie piano intro, Domino uncorks a tough, determined vocal as Bartholomew's men stomp hard, reduced almost to background static by the primitive, muddy quality of the recording. This spine-tingling track conjures up visions of another dimension, a weird transmission from the same spooky zone that produced Robert Johnson and Elvis Presley's Sun sessions.

Usually, he was sweeter. Try to hear Domino's dog-eared hits "Blueberry Hill" and "Ain't It a Shame" with fresh ears, and notice how wonderfully slow they are. Nobody plays with such easy grace anymore. A hit for Glenn Miller in 1940, "Blueberry Hill" typified Domino and Bartholomew's eclecticism, with everything from the Roaring '20s fave "My Blue Heaven" to Hank Williams's "Jambalaya" providing grist for the hit mill. It was all the same to Mr. D, who presented himself as an all-purpose entertainer, even as he stirred up impressionable youth.

Domino's impact was enormous. The Beatles cut "Lady Madonna" as an homage; Fats returned the compliment with a fine version of his own. Those sexy Crescent City rhythms contain seeds of ska and reggae. The list of folks who covered Mr. D, from the Animals to Randy Newman, would stretch to the moon. And so forth. By combining unflagging niceness with rock'n'roll integrity, Fats Domino may have been the most subversive superstar of his day. Have mercy!

They call him the fat man.

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stoned Dust Bros. groove, it rocks hard simply by sounding so cruddy: It's the herb-disco hybrid the Bar-Kays never quite perfected.

Chuck Eddy

LOU REED

Magic and Loss

Sire/Warner Bros.

Lou Reed's 1989 album *New York* is one of the rare examples for me of a favorite album that lost its luster almost immediately. Reed's most warmly received album in recent memory, *New York* took its cues from a gritty city but foundered when the former connoisseur of crime began berating crackheads. And maybe it's just me, but rock stars criticizing politicians *non grata* is not my idea of a hoedown.

Songs for Drella, an illustrious collaborative tribute to Andy Warhol with John Cale, followed in 1990 with Art-minded ardor—an untoward success that made up in strong lyrics and spare arrangements what it lost due to posturing. *Magic and Loss* draws upon both *Drella* and *New York* for its concept and tone.

Like *Drella*, *Magic and Loss* is an elegy, this time commemorating the recent deaths of pioneering rock songwriter Doc Pomus and Rotten Rita, one of Warhol's Factory girls. Like *New York*, this album features a bare-bones rock band—Rob Wasserman on bass, Reed and Michael Rathke on guitars, and Michael Blair (Elvis Costello, Tom Waits) on drums. Each song is named twice, the second time for its thematic significance—see, *Magic and Loss* is all about death, and not the hipster needle-in-the-arm kind, but the kind that comes unheeded, deglamorized. But once one gets beyond the outrageously pretentious concept and sobering subject matter, *Magic and Loss* is a rollicking good time.

The upbeat pile drivers ("What's Good—The Thesis" and "Warrior King—Revenge") are easily extracted from the narrative for optimum impact and danceability. "Cremation—Ashes to Ashes" is spare and lyrical ("Well, the cold black sea waits for me me me / The cold black sea waits forever"), possibly Reed's most beautiful song since the Velvet Underground's "The Ocean." Personable and intimate, Reed reveals numerous salient details about himself along the way (he's a *New York Times* reader, for example). Most importantly, Reed has found his flattest and most confident voice to date ("What's good? / Life's good, but not fair at all"). Oh, and by the way . . . *Magic and Loss* ain't my idea of a hoedown, either.

Alec Foege

MIRACLE LEGION

Drenched

Morgan Creek

Nostalgia for the not-so-distant past seems the most justifiable sort; and Miracle Legion has become the perfect band through which to reexperience the mid-'80s, a time when the bad guys were rich and the good guys all sounded like R.E.M. *Drenched*, Miracle Legion's fifth album, harks way back to around 1986, and methinks 'tis better to lionize this stuff now than to wax boho in ten years. Lead singer Mark Mulcahy's sybaritic soul moan is custom-made for the kind of weepy longing once prompted by '60s groups such as the Youngbloods and Jefferson Airplane.

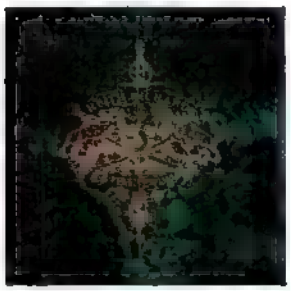
"Ridin' Lover" is the album's instant classic—a sailors' drinking song rivaling the Pogues at their best. Having recently been issued its license to operate a mandolin, Miracle Legion now favors slower tempos and swaggering folk melodies over earnest guitar jangling. Accordingly, the protracted goofiness of a song such as "Snacks and Candy" would have been impossible to achieve as recently as 1988's *Glad*. "Everything Is Rosy" poses an odd parallel to "Shiny Happy People," R.E.M.'s pop hit: Lines such as "And the KKK have changed their ways / They set their own house on fire" burned deep this past fall when hatemonger-*cum*-fishmonger David Duke vied for office, making "Rosy" clearly the more acidic contender for generational anthem status. It's funny—looking back at the start of this review—how sometimes it takes giving something an initial short sell to fully realize its inherent worth. To hell with nostalgia.

Alec Foege

KEITH RICHARDS & THE X-PENSIVE WINOS

Live at the Hollywood Palladium, December 15, 1988
Virgin

He sings like a dying dolphin and hasn't played a new lick in 20 years, but you'd be a fool not to love Keith Richards. After a celebrated career as the ultimate bad boy, he's eased gracefully into middle age



without losing his knack for trashy rock'n'roll. Nonbelievers are directed to this rip-snorting 1988 live set, an erratic yet consistently heartfelt batch of ancient and newer stuff. Among the badder moments are a storming "Take It So Hard" from his first solo LP and a seriously ratty version of the Stones classic "Connection."

If some tracks run too long, especially the reggae thang, at least Keith enjoys his work, which is the secret to a happy life, of course. Feeling the spirit, Richards's eager pals—including Waddy Wachtel, Bobby Keys, and Steve Jordan—pretend to know less than they do; Jordan has mastered the art of Wattsian directness at the drums. Based on the evidence so far, expect Keith to fare better after the Stones expire than the other Glimmer Twin.

Jon Young

WALKABOUTS

Scavenger
Sub Pop

While others forge boldly ahead and draw first blood, Walkabouts make the best of what's left behind. "I don't do this for good looks," Chris Eckman snaps on one track, and indeed, Walkabouts are not in it for the pretty boys and girls and two free drinks per band member. Playing folk music that does not exclude violence or volume, they cram an excess of ideas into ten sedate songs hazy with whiskey and painful histories. Promising "a white-knuckle journey you won't soon forget"—perhaps more than she can deliver—Carla Torgerson invites us on a journey underwater. "The bottom's a good place to start," she sings over a plummeting cello, trying to make you feel what it's like to be a piece of gold, a scrap of wood from a Spanish ship, a skeleton lying on the sea floor. "Wake up dead man, there's a noise," she implores, hoping to rouse old traditions into new life

The psych-folk is never less than excellent throughout *Scavenger*, but the two best tracks here are those featuring unlikely guest stars (among the last people whose names you'd expect to see anywhere near the Sub Pop logo)—since there's no one charismatic element to Walkabouts' sound, Brian Eno's synth on "Train to Mercy" and Natalie Merchant's harmonizing on "Where the Deep Water Goes" help to fix the subtle songs in your mind. (*available from Sub Pop, 1932 First Ave., Suite 1103, Seattle, WA 98101*)

Ivan Kreilkamp

THE MONKEES

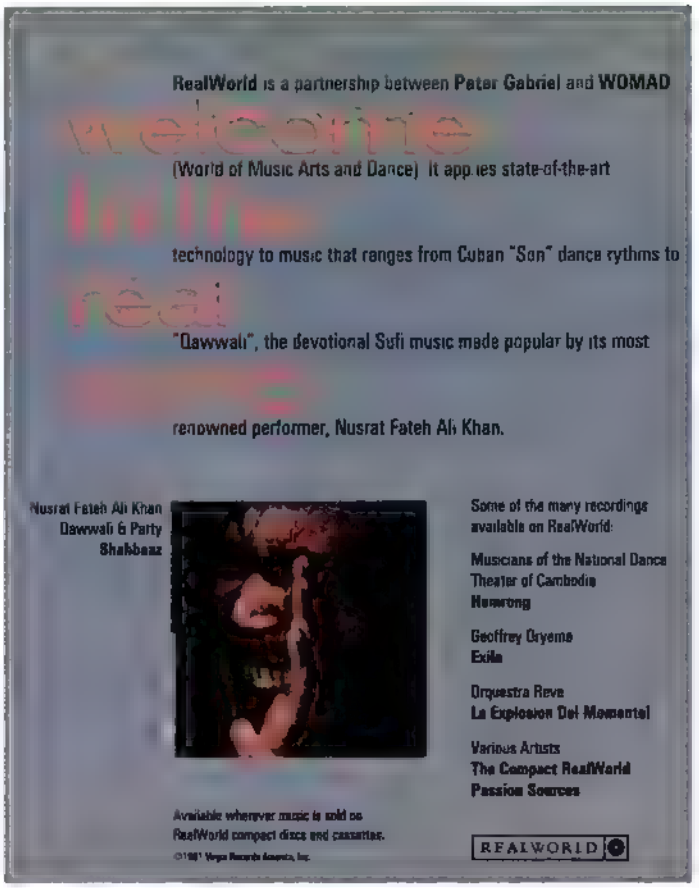
Listen to the Band
Rhino

I got food poisoning from eating a bad enchilada last night and spent most of today listening to my new Monkees box set and vomiting. Not that this four-CD collection of 80 songs spanning from 1966 to 1987 will make you vomit. To the contrary, this wonderful retrospective is worth the price of admission just for the memories it'll bring back and the amusing history included in its booklet.

The Monkees were quite a formidable quartet. Well, actually there were about a million people involved in the sounds you hear here (everyone from Neil Diamond to Neil Young), the most helpless and not-in-control of which, it seems, were the four actors themselves. The "band" was a total mass-media creation, at a level surpassing any Milli Vanilli MTV can cram down our throats. This box is an assembly of brilliant imitation and accidental originality—good ideas and bad. You'll probably recognize almost every song on the first two discs, but perhaps the most interesting stuff here is found on the last two, on which you hear the Monkees splinter into four sort of solo projects and then splinter apart. All of which leads to a few cuts from the very unfortunate late-'80s reunion.

Better than Pepto Bismol

Mark Blackwell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STOLAR TRACKS

Screaming Trees *Anthology: SST Years 1985–1989 (SST).*
A mouth-watering compilation of 21 previously released Screaming Trees tracks that takes you on a nostalgic tour of psychedelic post punk agression and leaves you clawing for more. If you're unfamiliar with the Trees' style of hard, sonic rock or just don't feel like pulling out all your old favorites, this is one history lesson you won't want to miss

The International Beat *The Hitting Line (Triple X).*
Members of now defunct English Beat and General Public break out the saxophone and blow off the cobwebs to belt out a pleasing ska rock fest with a slick '90s sound. Tracks don't sound much different than those from old English Beat records, which is reason enough to yank this one off the shelves.

Seven League Boots *Man About Town/Big Book seven inch (Constant Change).*
D.C.'s ex Soulside lead singer Bobby Sullivan leads this four man group in a quest for the perfect combination of reggae and hard hitting post-punk rock. *On Man About Town* the band just about succeeds, with Sullivan's angry yet somehow tender voice paving the way for musical greatness.

Tar *Jackson (Amphetamine Reptile).*
Don't let the unpleasant name of this Chicago foursome send you poking in the other direction at your local record store. *On Jackson*, Tar has perfected its style of supercharged rock, churning out tight, dense, aggressive melodies. A shining star among it's noisy, label counterparts.

Beat Happening *Sea Hunt/Knock On Any Door seven-inch. (K Records)*
Soft, lush and slow moving, *Sea Hunt* speaks with the subtle vocal harmonies of singer Calvin Johnson's baritone voice, set atop drummer Heather's sweet, gentle whisper. As usual, Beat Happening's 60's rock melodies are still simple constructions and bass free, which some people just don't go for. Too bad.

STOLI
THE RUSSIAN PHENOMENON.

Pig Out

BY JOHAN KUGELBERG

IT'S 1991, OKAY, AND IF NONGENERIC sounds on vinyl or CD are what you crave, please do act like a pig: Put your snout in the dirt and sniff them out. Truffles sure are hard to come by these days. The distance between the mainstream and the underground is as huge and as unbridgeable as it's always been, and these days it seems like indie land is shrinking. Nevertheless, if you're willing to look, there's always worthwhile stuff.

We recently acquired some obsolete vinyl music product from Nuf Sed Records. San Francisco's **Caroliner Rainbow Hernia Milkqueen** is a gargantuan earquake of psychedelia—closer to the eruptions of Silver Apples, the Godz, or Faust than the unicorn schlock of, say, Strawberry Alarm Clock. The band's three albums are as fun and twisted as Dr Seuss books, and the packaging itself is absolutely stunning. Home recorded, handmade, hand-pasted, and hand-painted. The do-it-yourself ethic is still strong in SF.

Fish and Roses from New York have released their third album, titled *Dear John* (Feel Good All Over Records). The new record is an amazing labyrinth of sound where you can run into Fred Frith's Massacre, Dolly Parton, Woody Guthrie, and the Beefheart's Magic Band before you find your way out. The band's musical approach is unpredictable and shows a knack for amazing songwriting and instrumental interplay. "We aren't a jazz band though, " says F&R's Sue Garner. "We're a folk band."

Bob Bannister's **Fire in the Kitchen** released its debut album, *Theory of Everything*, on the tiny Behemoth label recently. Influences from Big Star, Television and MX 80 Sound can be traced throughout. *Theory* is laced with crisp songwriting and guitar work with no boundaries—it's amazing to discover that such a mature-sounding band has only been around for a short time. Ten years from now this album will be referred to as a classic, and dodgy Europeans will reissue it. Buy it now and you'll be able to say, "I told you so."

Finally, we have the breathtaking **Billy Childish** CD-compilation on Sub Pop. This double-CD consists of 50 tracks from Billy Childish's 50 LPs. Covering his recording career since starting out with the Pop Rivits back in 1979 on through the Milkshakes, the Mighty Ceasers, Thee Headcoats and various collaborations and solo albums, these two hours of music are perfect evidence why punk rock was such a good idea. Billy Childish breathes the same air as Link Wray and the Raymen, Kinks circa 1965, and early Alternative TV Snuffle it up.

Fish & Roses, *from left*: Sue Garner, Rick Brown, and David Sutter.

Nuf Sed Records, P.O Box 591075, San Francisco, CA 94159, Feel Good All Over Records, Box 8428, Chicago, IL 60614; Behemoth Records, P.O. Box 27801, Las Vegas, NV 89102; Sub Pop, 1932 First Avenue, Suite 1103, Seattle, WA 98101.

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Winnie Mandela

continued from page 53

Friday night, Ikaneng saw Sithole gun down Tholi outside a bar. Tholi died in a hail of AK-47 bullets.

Ikaneng suddenly became a marked man. Winnie summoned him to her and, as he told it, "lifted me up by the front of my shirt and hit me with punches and slaps." Effectively under arrest by the club, he managed to escape and fled to Sharpeville, where he remained from the middle of November 1988 until January 3, 1989—just after the kidnapping of Stompie and his three friends. That same evening Ikaneng was accosted by Jerry Richardson, Stompie's killer, on a dark street. Richardson, along with eight of ten others who accompanied him, grabbed him, kicked and punched him, and took him to an open field. "I thought they were going to shoot me. They pushed me to the ground and Jerry sat on my stomach. One boy had the blade of some garden shears in his hand. Jerry told him to stab me with the blade, but he didn't have the nerve. Jerry took it and pushed the blade into my neck."

Ikaneng, who was left for dead, still bears the scars of that attack. In the public furor over Stompie, this attempted murder for which Richardson was convicted along with the Stompie murder, went largely unnoticed. As did another murder which took place just three days before the Mass

sion to kill the two men had been taken at a meeting chaired by Winnie. Instead, Chili killed Madondo and argued in court that it was in self-defense. Evidently the judge believed him, for not only did he give Chili a very short sentence, he gave two of his coaccused suspended sentences and acquitted three others, Ikaneng included. A seventh person, Chili's mother, Dudu Chili, had charges dismissed the day before the trial began.

After Madondo's death, Dudu Chili, a well-known veteran of ANC politics, steeled herself for a revenge attack. It was not long in coming, only she had the good fortune to be out on the night of February 22 when the attack on her home took place. The three children of her next-door neighbor and sister-in-law, Mrs. Msoni, were not so lucky. They were watching TV inside Dudu Chili's house. Mrs. Msoni recalled hearing various shots and an explosion. "We tried to get into the house but there was smoke and flames. We couldn't put out the fire. But then we managed to find the body. We pulled her [Finky, age 13] out. She had a big hole in her left-hand side. She was all burned, all open, like when a sausage has been put in the fire."

Mrs. Chili had no doubt who was to blame. "I hate Winnie Mandela. I must say I hate her. I hate her for what she did to me." On September 17 last year a court lent weight to what Mrs. Msoni suspected all along. Charles Zwane—Oupa Seheri's coaccused in February 1988 and a member of the Football Club—was sentenced to death for the

LOLO DISAPPEARED NEARLY THREE YEARS AGO. But the curse of the Mandela United Football Club lives on. Katiza Chebekhulu, the secret witness who testified that Winnie had conspired to murder Chili and Ikaneng, disappeared himself this year, just before Winnie's trial started. One of the seven charged with assaulting and kidnapping Stompie and his three friends, he was due to stand trial with Winnie.

In March this year, with the trial well under way, it was discovered that Katiza was in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. Two months later he spoke to the Zambian press, claiming that the ANC had brought him Lusaka against his will so that he could not appear at Winnie's trial. The ANC feared that he would not corroborate Winnie's contention—accepted by the judge, as it turned out—that she had been absent when the actual beatings took place, because in October 1990 Katiza had told reporters that not only had he seen Winnie take part in the pummelings, she had forced him to join or be beaten himself.

At present, Katiza remains in a Zambian jail at the behest of the ANC, which wields considerable influence over the Zambian authorities. At least, as far as can be ascertained, no attempt has been made on his life. Which is more than can be said about Ikaneng, who was shot and seriously injured by gunmen in Soweto on May 8, 1991, five days before Winnie's conviction. From his hospital bed, Ikaneng identified two of his attackers as fellow founding members of the Football Club.

"The deceased, Maxwell Madondo, was a member of the Football Club and a decision was made by Mrs. Winnie Mandela and the Football Club to kill accused No. 1, Chili, and accused No. 6, Ikaneng."

Democratic Movement's public condemnation of Winnie. Again the Football Club was involved. This time, however, it was one of Winnie's loyal lieutenants who was on the receiving end.

THE POSTMORTEM REPORT ON MAXWELL Madondo revealed that his head had been smashed to pieces by repeated blows with a rock. Sibusiso Chili was found guilty. But, surprisingly, he avoided the mandatory death penalty and was sentenced instead to one year in jail. Why? On account of the most incriminating piece of evidence against Winnie ever heard in court—her trial this year included. Remarkably, this evidence has never been reported in the South African press.

Chili stood trial with five others, among them Ikaneng and a youth known as "Killer." The following statement was placed in the court record: "The admission the State will make is that the deceased, Maxwell Madondo, was a member of the Football Club and that a decision was made by Mrs. Winnie Mandela and the Football Club to kill accused No. 1, Chili, and accused No. 6, Ikaneng. That the witness, my lord, whose name I shall not mention now, together with Killer and the deceased, all were instructed and went to carry out decision to kill accused Nos. 1 and 6."

The secret witness, club member Katiza Chebekhulu, had told defense lawyers that the decikilling of Finky Msoni. The defense and prosecution agreed that revenge for the Madondo murder had been the motive. Zwane's defense lawyer argued, as part of the plea for mitigation of the sentence, that he had come under the influence of Winnie's dominant personality.

Amazingly, Winnie was not called as a witness at Zwane's trial. More surprising still, the police in Soweto have not managed to follow up on information in their possession alleging that Lolo Sono, a youth who disappeared on November 13, 1988, was last seen, severely beaten, in the company of Winnie.

Lolo's father said Winnie turned up outside his home in a *kombi* van on the last day he saw his son. She told him Lolo was a police spy. "I asked where Lolo is and she said, 'Well, I've got Lolo with me, he's in the back of the *kombi*.' When I saw Lolo, by then his eyes were swelling up. He was badly beaten. I tried to plead with her. I said, 'Okay, you can leave him with me—the movement will see what to do.' When Lolo tried to talk, she kept telling him to shut up. Then she said they are taking him away. That's all she told me."

Sono still harbors the hope that his son will reappear, that perhaps he was taken to one of "the movement" 's—the ANC's—camps abroad. What makes him hesitate is Winnie's accusation that Lolo was a sellout, for that was what he heard Stompie had been accused of.

Another eyewitness corroborated Ikaneng's story. He said he only had one explanation for the attack, that it was an act of revenge for his having testified against Jerry Richardson in court.

HOW TO EXPLAIN THE POWERFUL HOLD WINNIE Mandela has on people? She is beautiful, but physically large and powerful; she is extraordinarily charming when she wants to be, but willful beyond words and capable of Olympian fits of rage. Together, the parts combine to generate a unique presence, a charismatic force.

And it was an extraordinary hold Winnie Mandela exercised over the minds of the often fiercely loyal young men who came under her spell. (Indeed, the old men, too—Nelson Mandela remaining entirely bewitched to this day.) A case in point is Sizwe Sithole, the head of the club's disciplinary committee who accused Ikaneng of being a sellout. Sithole, the father of one of Zindzi Mandela's children, was found hanged in a Johannesburg police cell in January 1990. President F. W. de Klerk himself appointed a judicial commission to inquire into the hanging. Justice Goldstone, much respected by the ANC for his impartiality, concluded that Sithole had hanged himself in shame after having made a series of confessions to the police implicating his former lover and her mother in criminal deeds.

Jerry Richardson, the Football Club coach sentenced to death for the murder of Stompie Moeketski, consistently refused to shed any of the burden of guilt on Winnie. In Winnie's own trial this year, the judge convicted her largely on the basis of his own belief that the Football Club boys would not have acted without her blessing—indeed, when the appeal comes up next year her lawyers are planning their strategy precisely around what they have called this "inferential reasoning."

All in all, perhaps it is in the age-old concept of the matriarch that her power is best understood. A matriarch who can manipulate and control for good or ill. When Winnie herself emerged from court on the evening of May 13, having just been pronounced guilty by Justice Stegmann, she wore a broad smile of triumph, her fist raised in a black power salute in response to the muted crowd of barely 100 supporters. It had to have been the most miserable moment of her life but you would not have guessed it to see her. Nelson Mandela, who had loyally taken the day off from tending to the nation's affairs to be by his wife's side, looked as if his mother had just died.

The contrast—he in white raincoat, she in black suit—said much about this most ill-matched of couples, about the difference in their perceptions of reality. This tragic spectacle, on the coldest day of the year in Johannesburg, offered a reminder of just how tenuous, how fantastic, her grip on reality had become.

IF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AS A WHOLE has tended to inhabit a mythological revolutionary world, full of the motifs of "armed struggle" and "popular insurrection," no one has presented a more caricatural spectacle than Winnie Mandela. All fire and bombast, her political image in recent years has rested on appealing to the crudest, most facile instincts of the adolescents who provide the ANC with much of its energy but so little useful thought.

Always in impeccably pressed military fatigues and matching cap and boots, her custom has been to stand up on platforms and talk of war, of overthrowing the Boers—forever bordering on the antiwhite racism that ANC principle abhors. She has ranted and postured while her grave husband—the very personification of the ANC with all its present troubles and its worthy principles of old—attempts to wrestle with the complex nitty-gritty of political life in South Africa. Never before could a 73-year-old man who has spent nearly half his life in prison have had to bear so impossibly heavy a political burden.

But he dotes on his wife. She stood by him, as he sees it, during his long imprisonment, and she can do no wrong. He has suspended his reason and, blinded by love, has ignored the howls of protest from within his own movement.

Today he may be paying the price. The ANC's top leadership, radically restructured after a big national congress in July, has sought to diminish Mr. Mandela's power and influence. It would be premature to write him off but, having reigned almost supreme in the ANC since his release from prison in February 1990, the indications are that he will increasingly assume a ceremonial role in the organization. It would be wrong to say that this is happening solely on account of his wife—that he is a Samson brought low by his Delilah—for he has also been perceived within the ANC as being uncomfortably autocratic in his leadership style.

AND WHAT OF WINNIE'S OWN POLITICAL FORtunes? She remains a player, for the myth does still endure. Or rather it endures longer the farther away one gets from Soweto. Indeed in the Johannesburg area at large, where the Football Club's impact has been felt directly, she has few friends. This was the main reason why at the congress of the ANC Women's League in April 1991 she was roundly defeated in the presidential election. But in July she was elected to the ANC's 87-member National Executive Committee, despite furious lobbying against her by the Johannesburg contingent.

She is not a powerful figure in the NEC, but she does have position. There are those who argue that this is as it should be, that she merits a place in the honor roll of South Africa's black liberation struggle. Those who argue this most strongly are those who knew her best in the '60s and '70s and have not been close to her in recent years, have not met the victims of her Football Club's violence. Nelson Mandela himself falls squarely in this category.

He derived critical strength from her during his 26-year ordeal in prison. As he wrote to her in May 1979, "Had it not been for your visits, wonderful letters, and your love, I would have fallen apart many years ago." He was also aware of the courage she had to show during many years of continual persecution by the police, her own jailings, and the banishment to Brandfort. It was after she returned to Soweto from Brandfort, in 1985, that the first signs emerged that something inside her had cracked. She delivered a speech in which she urged her supporters to take their matchboxes and their "necklaces"—car tires filled with gasoline, placed around a victim's neck, and set afire—into the white suburbs. A year later she started the Football Club.

Her transgressions since 1986 have caused great harm to the ANC, for which many will never forgive her. But some will. The British writer Anthony Sampson, who knew the Mandelas well in the fifties, wrote this on the day after Winnie's trial ended: "There remains some connection between her present ignominy and her past glory. The world's admiration had put her on an isolated peak, crediting her with impossible virtue; while her sense of immunity made her a law unto herself and broke her own self-control, without the one man who could have restrained her."

Fine sentiments, and not without some truth. But Mr. Sampson and other apologists of Winnie's might change their tune were they to come face to face with Mr. Sono, Mrs. Msoni, or Mrs. Chili. Mrs. Chili believes that the only reason Winnie retains some degree of preeminence and esteem is, simply and exclusively, because she is the wife of the of the ANC leader. "Alone, an ordinary person deprived of his reflected glory," Mrs. Chili says, "no one would have any time for her at all."

Tom Freston

continued from page 55

Freston: It was a tough call. In the end, it's a great marketing ploy to get banned by MTV if you're famous, because you can sell a lot of tapes and it creates controversy. We probably could have played it, but I still think it was a reasonable decision given who we are and where we are. We played it in Europe, we played it in Brazil, but the United States has a big hang-up about sex. There isn't a week that goes by where there isn't some community somewhere in this country actively seeking to remove MTV from its cable service.

SPIN: They can change the channel.

Freston: Right, change the channel, but unfortunately, a lot of these groups are more, like, change the channel lineup. Madonna thought that it was a video that would've been suitable for MTV; but we'd never aired a video with any nudity in it before. People think of cable, they think of Showtime and HBO. Those are cable services that people pay extra for to get into their house. A lot of people didn't get cable to get MTV; MTV goes into a lot of people's homes who bought cable to get the Christian Broadcast Network.

SPIN: Is there any censorship you regret?

Freston: Neil Young's video ["This Note's for You"]. Ultimately, it was a decision I approved, but it wasn't because of censorship. We had this thing about not showing products on videos, because advertisers were trying to sneak things in; they were offering record companies fifty thousand dollars to pay for the video if they'd let them put their product in it. So, it was in keeping with our no-product-placement policy. But it was stupid, because everyone thought, "Oh, they censored Neil Young, the rock'n'roll hero, those uptight MTV corporate pigs," and we got killed. But we deserved to get killed. Anyway, it won Best Video of the Year the next year.

SPIN: How often do you have to tell people to edit things out of videos, and how do you feel about it?

Freston: We do as little of it as possible, and it's the thing we probably like to do the least. Here's the thing; on radio, if a disc jockey wants to say *shit* when he's very excited, and it's a colloquial term, the station will lose its FCC license. The bottom line is nobody in his audience is going to be offended, but it's a violation of the law. The radio station may feel bad about it, but they adhere to it in order to stay on the air. And the fact of the matter is, in order for us to stay on the air, we have to adhere to local television standards. We can't show nudity or have profanity and stay in business.

SPIN: What would it take for a brand-new act to get its video on MTV if there wasn't a big record company push?

Freston: We always think we don't know what we want until we see it, or hear it. The bottom line is, we can only play eighty-five videos a week in any meaningful way; we change about twenty-five of them a week. So we're perfectly capable of making mistakes from time to time and missing some. But the Black Crowes are a good example: They came in here basically with a good video, they didn't do any kind of incredible promotion with us, and everyone just fell in love with it. We

Tom Freston

put it on, and the audience loved it.

SPIN: Have there been any payola attempts with MTV?

Freston: Basically we've set up a system that's very complicated. Most people in the record business don't know who to talk to to get a video on MTV, and it's been purposely set up that way. You would have to pay off a lot of people simultaneously for a long period of time, and it's never happened.

SPIN: How do you think the record companies have attempted to manipulate MTV?

Freston: Maybe with banks of professional demon phone dialers. Or there's been a lot of suspicious fan mail for certain videos, but maybe that's fan club directed. It's hard to tell. I don't know if we get manipulated, but each record company has a department whose job it is to deal almost solely with MTV, so we get promoted a lot. The good news is that they cancel each other out.

SPIN: Madonna, Paula Abdul, Janet Jackson, M.C. Hammer, et cetera. Do you think you created these stars? Or do you think they're just stars and they help you stay in business?

Freston: I think they're stars that help us stay in business—we need them, we need to make new stars. People are going to turn on MTV mostly 'cause they want to see stars. If people are attached to people, they turn on MTV in the hope that they'll see Paula Abdul or Janet Jackson. They basically aren't turning it on, believe it or not, to see a new band, other than those who are trying to stay on top of things.

SPIN: What's it been like doing this with virtually no competition?

Freston: We never looked at it that way. Our competition is ABC, NBC, HBO—somebody sitting there with this remote control is like, *bango*, one frame they don't like, they're gone.

SPIN: What is MTV's biggest problem?

Freston: Sometimes it lends rock'n'roll a quality of caricature. There's a danger that with a lot of videos if just one more thing was wrong, you could have a great song with a bad video. With all popular entertainment, as soon as something's successful everybody copies it, and in video there has been a lot of sameness. Video goes through periods of ups and downs in its creativity; with the hairbands and the women, and then it's all black-and-white, and then all color videos. That's not a problem just with MTV, that's a problem of popular culture.

SPIN: Do you worry MTV is visually identified with the '80s and could soon look very dated?

Freston: Only because that's the time period it has existed in to date. In 1960, you would have said that about rock'n'roll, because it had just started. I think MTV is associated with modern television, which means a lot of channels and remote control; I get control over my TV set and when I want to watch something, whatever I want to watch, I push this button and it's there. In 1995, we're going to have a hundred channels in the home, and they'll be pay-per-view channels on demand, with a TV set we're hardly going to recognize.

SPIN: Is it possible to be a star without MTV? Do you think that video killed the radio star?

Freston: No, that would give MTV too much credit. People have wonderful careers today without even putting records out. They may not be making fortunes, but Jimmy Buffett, and Steve Miller and the Grateful Dead were among the biggest touring acts of the summer—they packed them in, and they've got a good fan base and in their fans' eyes those people are stars. It depends on how high you want to go. If you want to be a superstar and be on everybody's lips, then being on television and MTV is not a bad thing.

SPIN: How do you feel about the emergence of alternative music as part of the mainstream—as witnessed by the success of the Lollapalooza tour, or Metallica?

Freston: This is a time of major, fundamental change in the music industry. I think a lot of people don't even know how big the change is that's coming. We've had almost a twenty-five-year ride on a certain kind of music, and the appeal of that music has started to wane for the first time. Particularly with people under twenty-four who want their own artists, who don't relate that well to artists of prior generations. And the emergence of alternative bands and rap is really healthy. It's not that a lot of major acts will disappear, but they'll wane in popularity because it's a changing of the guard. People can relate to a twenty-three-year-old kid playing a guitar on tour rather than someone who's sitting in Malibu. It shouldn't be an unexpected surprise. If rock'n'roll is about words and poetry and meaning something in your life, a lot of times you'll take it from someone who's not a millionaire.

Oliver Stone

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think he became a threat to the republic.

SPIN: If, indeed, John Kennedy was killed, as you are suggesting, by evil forces and evil men in order to prevent him from doing good things, doesn't this leave him as kind of a messiah figure?

Stone: If one sets up the idea that society can be saved by its government. I'm not so sure that it can. Individuals have to do it. But, why couldn't he have become a great, great President? There was something destined about him, and he certainly had a compassion. He seemed to have a love of people and a love of laughter. You say, yeah, he could have been a great President and he could have done things that would have significantly altered the destiny of this country. We might be richer now. More people might be alive, less people might be dead in foreign countries and maybe we'd be a more prosperous society right now with more racial integration. If you call that a savior, yeah, call it a savior. That's your word, not mine. It seems John Kennedy was too early for his time and it was a shame.

The 1960s, my generation, had this tremendous surge of hope and idealism for a better world—a "Peace Corps World," let's call it, for want of simplification. Then it just kind of caved in so quick. Bobby Kennedy went down in the bizarrest of assassinations. Martin Luther King, Jr., again in the same year, 1968. I was in Vietnam at that time. All the blacks in my unit were so upset when King was killed, and they said, "Never again! Don't trust whitey!" And it was over. You could just feel the '60s clattering down on top of you, you know? It was a nightmare. And then we took drugs and dropped out, and then Nixon came in on this tremendous fear and everyone was so scared in 1968 that the world was going crazy with all these killings and assassinations. He was a face from the past and he came in and presented, like Hitler did, the concept of law and order to cure disorder. What did he give us? He promised us peace and he gave us four more years of war. He promised us order and gave us chaos. He gave us Watergate.

SPIN: To a lot of observers, your films are assertive moral parables. It's been suggested that in *The Doors*, your choice of Jim Morrison was an expression of the human quality of individual integrity. That it said: Come what may, hell or high water, whatever, integrity is a moral value in itself. Certainly, *Wall Street* is a pretty clear story of good and evil, a moral lesson. Is there a direct moral lesson in *JFK*?

Stone: Well, you have a reformer who is killed by the bad guys, by the establishment, because he seeks change. And then you have another man, an ordinary citizen, a sort of Capraesque prosecutor with a naive idealism and belief in the country, a true believer, as Jim Garrison was. Hardly the kook pictured by the press at the time. And he was truly a patriot. He had no love of John Kennedy particularly. He was if anything on the conservative side. A reformer on his own. In New Orleans, he cleaned up the vice dens in Bourbon Street, and he, in this, parallels, in a sense, the Kennedy story, too, because in the course of investigating his death, Garrison begins to doubt his own government and begins to doubt everything around him. He's fired from the National Guard. He's offered a bribe, he's offered a judgeship. His offices are bugged, his witnesses die. His family starts to turn on him. He's attacked by NBC [*The Case of Jim Garrison*, broadcast in June 1967], it completely devastates him. It tells the public before the trial who his witnesses are, and that he's bribed his witnesses. All these horror things, like the story of Job, happened to this poor man, and in the process he sort of goes, I suppose, undergoes this transference, that we all have, and that I get from making movies. He begins to really understand John Kennedy from the inside out. What he must have gone through in those years of change from 1961 to 1963. And Jim Garrison becomes, in a sense, John Kennedy. In my thinking. And makes a noble effort, almost a doomed effort, to bring the case to trial. And loses, as you know. But there is an optimistic note in this movie. Clay Shaw may go free, but the jury in New Orleans said there is no question in their mind that he had proved that there was a conspiracy in Dealey Plaza. And he says, "This war may take 30 more years, but at least I will have fired the opening round."

SPIN: *Time* magazine, George Lardner in the *Washington Post*, and a bunch of others have bitterly attacked the JFK film, without having seen a single frame of it. Are there institutional pressures or alliances at work against you? Is that part of a grand scheme?

Stone: I don't think it's part of a grand scheme. I think these are veterans who followed the case for years, and they hated Garrison for years for various reasons and they've all come together to at-

tack the film because they see it as a vindication of Garrison.

SPIN: Going back again to the meaning of these people of the '60s—were Jim Morrison and John Kennedy of the same spirit?

Stone: Sure they were. They were both carousers, they were both Irish. Jim Garrison, too. Garrison and Morrison both loved to tell tall tales, both loved to party, loved women, loved booze, loved to laugh. They were gentle in some fundamental way, they had respect for life. Jim Morrison was anarchic, much more so than Jack, but Jack had an anarchic side, you know. But Morrison was never a politically responsible person, but in one sense was a kindred sole. I think that they are both handsome, heroic men.

SPIN: Is your role as a filmmaker the most effectively influential possible one for you in the modern world? Is this the best way to influence the good minds and hearts?

level. There was a singular lack of protection for Kennedy in Dallas, given the nature of the fact that Adlai Stevenson [the Democratic candidate opposite Eisenhower in the '52 and '56 elections] had been spit on a month before. And that Dallas had a simmering reputation for hatred for Kennedy. And there had been several assassination attempts, in Miami and in the South, where he was supposed to be hit. It was sort of a thread of evidence boiling beneath the surface in the last few months before he was killed—of him being hit. I would say like twenty-five to thirty of these weird coincidences start to happen. Any rational mind is going to start to reach out and wonder.

SPIN: You are saying that methodical review of incontrovertible fact finally led you not to believe the conventional conclusions?

Stone: That's right.

SPIN: Are all your heroes victims?

Stone: In part. I hate the word as a whole, because it implies victimization as if you want that to happen to you. But I think you become a victim of yourself as much as you do of outside forces too. You have personality traits that get you into a mess. You know, like I got into a mess in Vietnam. Or Billy Hayes got into a mess in *Midnight Express*. Or Garrison maybe had some victimization in him that pushed him to this place where he was abandoned. Isolated and cut off. But I think of it more as living out your destiny. Victimization sounds weak to me.

his poetry, and he paid the price that he sought to pay. He knew he was flirting with death.

SPIN: So he got to the other side?

Stone: Yeah, but once he got there he was ready for it. He united with his death. His death was a part of him from day one. The very first scene in the movie, the child in a car. He's attracted to it, reaching for it. The roadside accident. The whole movie is really about his coming to terms with it.

SPIN: But surely you wouldn't argue that, conventionally and universally, the quest for death is a very positive way to go about viewing the hope of a society?

Stone: Jim Morrison was a Romantic poet, in the sense of Rimbaud and Baudelaire and Apollinaire. They all died young. Keats, Byron, Shelley. It's a tradition of Romantic poetry. You aren't supposed to live long, because you're supposed to represent something. You're a symbolic poet, a symbolist poet. He did his job, Jim. It

"The 1960s, my generation, had this tremendous surge of hope and idealism for a better world. Then it just kind of caved in. You could feel the '60s clattering down on you."

Stone: No, I think this thing can be fought on many fronts: as a writer, a journalist, a doctor. I would encourage people to follow their potentials. Not to make movies, particularly. You have to have a certain nature to make movies. You have to be extremely tenacious and practical. You have to fight so many battles to make a picture.

SPIN: I have asked some young Jim Morrison enthusiasts, some very hip kids, about John Kennedy and they say: "Well, what the hell, John Kennedy was just a smarter, younger Ronald Reagan." Part of the same fabric?

Stone: Wow! I would say that whoever thinks that is ultimately utterly cynical as to the political system. There is a huge difference between John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. One is a closed man, and the other was an open man. One was young, and one was old. And it's sad to hear that commentary. If it's true, it is only coming from the result of Kennedy's murder to begin with, because it has desensitized the American public and taught them to lose faith in their government through the years. And by now, thirty years later, twenty-eight years after his death, it is clear that we truly are a deadhead society. We're into heavy metal, and nothing matters anymore. There is no right or wrong.

SPIN: How did you come to the conclusion of conspiracy? Through study, or by some emotional metamorphosis?

Stone: Like Sherlock Holmes, in analyzing the case you come up against some pretty hard questions as to who could cover up the case. Why would it be covered up? Who benefited? Why was Kennedy killed? When you lead back from those questions, then you see the broader implications of it, and it leads to the conspiracy at the highest

SPIN: Is it inevitable that a person with force and integrity, a good person, of historic proportions, is going to ultimately succumb to misery and agony? All of the principal, positive characters in Oliver Stone films tend to be men who end somehow in misery or horror.

Stone: Who go through misery and horror. But don't necessarily end in it. At the end of *Platoon*, Charlie Sheen is reunited with his country, in a different sense. And in *Born on the Fourth of July*, Ron Kovic goes through horror but I think emerges in a heroic fashion. You go through hell. The Garrison character in a sense is chastened, but he wins his soul at the end because he's fought for it. And although he may have lost, he won. I see Morrison as a very optimistic story. I think people misunderstood that movie. The superficial aspect is, yeah, he has success, and then like the typical rock star he slides into oblivion, through drug usage and drinking. That's not the way I made that movie. I see him as coming to terms with his death, through the whole movie. At the end of the film you see a smile on his face when he's in the bathtub in Paris. He knew where he was going. He was half in love with death all his life. He wrote about it beautifully, eloquently in

wasn't like a slide into death. He was more lucid at the end in many ways than he ever was in the beginning. And some of his poetry at the end is great. The whole film is framed as the *American Prayer* album, which is the last thing he ever recorded—alone one night in December, after he had done the "Riders on the Storm" album [*L.A. Woman*, 1971], which I think has some terrific—some of his best music. But he did *American Prayer* by himself, and it's a great album. It's well worth listening to. It was his confession. And I used a lot of it in the movie. A man who is falling apart is not going to be that lucid, the way he was. The words, he reminds me of Dylan Thomas. Dylan Thomas was—correct me if I'm wrong—writing some very good stuff on the edge of his death.

SPIN: And not unaffirmative. But there are some people of integrity and force who are not defeated. You just said that. But there's a question of what would a truly affirmative Oliver Stone story be, and I think you have answered by saying Oliver Stone's stories *are* affirmative. If in a rather black way.

Stone: I'm subject to change, you know. I'm only forty-five right now, and one can't make the same movie over again. I haven't. I feel like each one has been a growth for me. But who knows what direction it's going to go. I could see it coming—I would like to make a movie about a woman protagonist. In fact I developed one, which I'm working on. I'd like to move in other directions. More tender, a little softer. I can see that when I am older. While I have some energy as a young man, I would like to put that energy where it belongs, into what I feel. But I think that energy changes through time, and it's going to soften.

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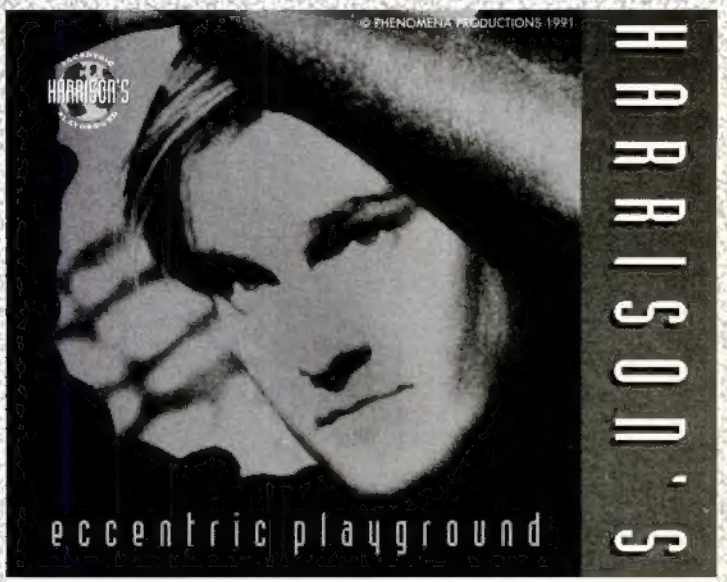

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BACK PAGE

BOOK BAG

Our very own Reporter-Still-at-Large DEAN CHRISTOPHER carefully considers three best-selling books, and tells it straight.

***Scarlett* by Alexandra Ripley (Warner Books).** This is the "long awaited" sequel to *Gone With the Wind*. The author was chosen for this project by the estate of *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell, presumably because she writes just like Miss Mitchell. This is all the more believable when you realize that Margaret Mitchell is presently a 91-year-old dead woman.

There's no searing lust here, just 823 pages brimming with terminally dull, chatty folks whose unrelenting dopiness makes it easy to understand why the South lost the war. Not much happens here: family squabbles, coffee, tea, social stuff, rain.

One expects no pornography in a book so blatantly designed for the G-rated, postmenopausal silver screen. But *fiddle-dee-dee*, the characters shouldn't *all* be so inhumanly sexless, especially in what pretends to be a great romance! *Scarlett* has all the animalism of a rummage through an elderly spinster's dresser drawers. Scarlett and Rhett emerge as tiresome geeks. He is virtually a walk-on, yet we suffer her adolescent crush on him for more than 800 pages before she finally makes him hers. *Arrrgh!* This book is a cynical exploitation intended to squeeze profit from another person's work. It's insulting. It portrays Southerners and the Irish as simplistic one-and-a-half-dimensional whiskerweights. But wait. This isn't literature at all; it's marketing. So the joke is on us. Is *Scarlett* a riotous parody of those "heaving bosom" ladies' books? Read these extracts, then decide:

She was gasping for breath. Where was the bucket? Where was the dawn?

Scarlett was no stranger to ladders, and she had a good head for heights.

"I'm Scarlett O'Hara, an Irish lass with a free-swinging skirt and a secret red petticoat."

She felt longings she could not name, an emptiness that cried out to be filled within her. "Rhett," she whispered against the rope, bruising her lips, inviting the roughness and the hurt.

Lady Sophia Dudley was seventeen. She had hair the gold of ripe hay and eyes as blue as the summer sky and a pink-and-white complexion that put porcelain to shame.

On page 819, Scarlett finally gets Rhett to declare his true feelings:

"I love you, you abusive wench."

***Final Exit* by Derek Humphry (The Hemlock Society).** This is the last do-it-yourself book you'll ever need. It's a detailed suicide manual for hopeless terminally ill patients. Its publication has outraged many because there's no guarantee it won't be used by emotionally unstable people rather than mature, rational adults who want to do themselves in.

Medically assisted suicide is still illegal in most of the U.S.—but providing information about lethal techniques is not. So this book is a bonanza for death buffs. All the details are covered: ethics, legalities, how to inform loved ones, where to get your "magic pills," dosage charts, how to store lethal drugs ("Keep out of children's reach" takes on macabre new urgency), and, of course, how to accomplish the last goal.

Humphry tersely examines the choices. Forget messy solutions like shotguns or a leap under the 5:17—too yucky for relatives and cleanup crews. Cyanide can be painful and violent. His bottom line: fast-acting sleeping pills and a plastic bag—just to be sure, like a stake through the heart.

Some unintentional drollery peeps through the gloom:

Should you use a clear plastic bag or an opaque one? That's a matter of taste.

I guess it's never too late to love the world. Or to consider comfort.

The plastic bag should be loose, but not huge since that will take longer.

As if another four minutes mattered to Eternity. Perhaps the author's most useful piece of advice:

Think things through extremely carefully.

Both *Scarlett* and *Final Exit* are huge best-sellers. This suggests American readers are stampeding into either vapid romance or ugly, sensationalist reality. Is there no room in our literary lives for brains or beauty? In a word, yes.

***Oh, the Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss (Random House).** In fewer than 50 pages the late Ted Geisel (Dr. Seuss) imparts more life affirmation and human value than the combined 1,015 pages of the above-mentioned works. This book, one of dozens of uplifting, imaginative works in his long career, illustrates a brief description of life's journey. This "children's" book, unlike the "ladies'" book described earlier, is appealing and useful beyond its category. The following extract is worth more than a shelf of those psychoblather self-help volumes; the whole book costs but a fraction of one visit to a bearded Viennese:

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And *you* are the guy who'll decide where to go.

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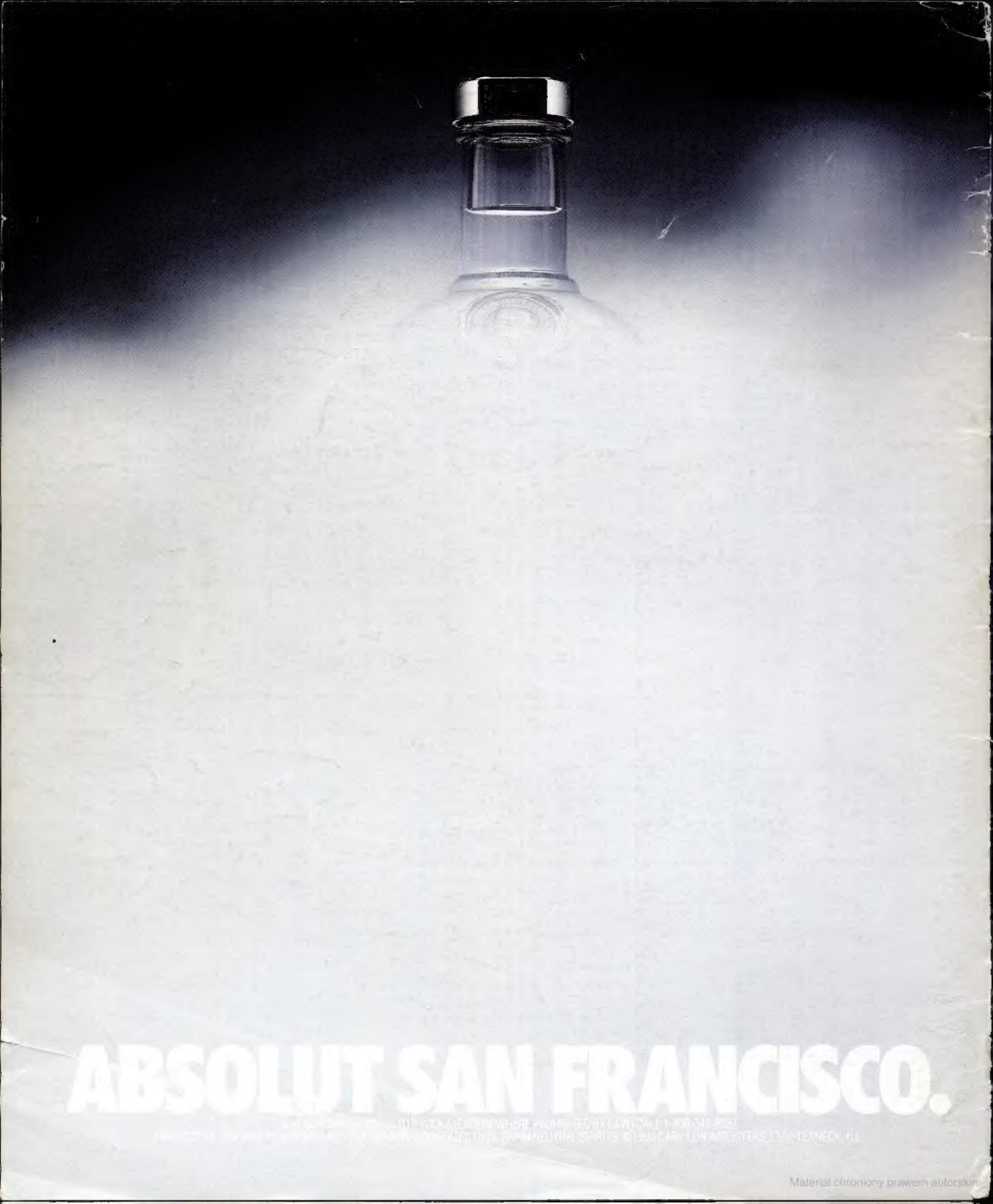

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